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VOICES OF INDIAN FREEDOM MOVEMENT

VOICES OF INDIAN FREEDOM MOVEMENT

(VOICE OF MUSLIM ISOLATIONISM AND COMMUNALISM)

Muslim League Speaks 1906 - 1925

VOLUME X

Part One

(Book 1)

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PREFACE

The history of the Indian freedom movement is mainly the history of the Indian National Congress that represented and reflected the real will of the people of the country. It is evident from the irrefutable fact that people belonging to all parts of the country and professing different faiths and creeds joined this national organisation to take part in the freedom struggle and serve the country in the best possible manner. However, in opposition to this trend of progressive and constructive nationalism, some other trends of a sectarian and communal nature also grew which I have sought to include in different volumes with a view to maintain, as far as possible, the unity of a particular trend. A section of the Indian Muslim intelligentsia ridiculed and denigrated the aims and objects of the Indian National Congress from the very beginning and took to the ways of isolationism and exclusivism that led to the intensification of the trend of sectarianism and communalism in the politics of the freedom movement of India.

The rejection of the basic principles of a liberal democratic system like 'one person, one vote' and recruitment of the legislators through free and fair elections irrespective of any discrimination on the grounds of religion, caste, creed, race, sex, wealth, education and the like and in stead the advocacy of a system ensuring protected representation to the Muslims in the Central and Provincial Legislative Councils by means of separate electorates in view of the numerically weaker position of the Muslims compared to the numerically strong position of the Hindus synchronised with the aims and designs of the British imperialists who sought to reinforce their policy of 'divide and rule' by the strategy of the conciliation and counterpoise of the natives against the natives. The leaders of the Muslim intelligentsia subscribing to this line of thought and action appreciated Viceroy Lord Curzon's scheme of the Partition of Bengal in 1905 and his successor (Lord Minto)

obliged them by allowing a secret audience at Simla on I October, 1906. The result was the formation of the Muslim League about two months after and the inauguration of the communal electorate system for the Muslims under the Morley-Minto Reforms about threee years hence.

Certainly the Muslim League came into being as a counter-blow to the Indian National Congress. From its very inception its leaders took to the way of affirming full and unstinted loyalty to the British Raj which alone could safeguard their political interests. At the same time, it served the purpose of its masters by taking to the way of relentlessly criticising the policies and programmes of the Indian National Congress and it found its natural appreciation in the pronouncements and interpretations of the British leaders, observers and commentators. The period of the first World War and shortly thereafter may be taken as an exception when the League leaders expressed resentment at the British policy causing dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire and termination of the Caliphate and in this situation of helplessness they sought to draw closer and closer to the Congress with a view to achieve their political ends. As the Khilafat Movement had a bitter failure, they again reverted to their old line that confirmed the fact of its being a pampered child of the British imperial genius. As such, I have put the matter in two parts. While Part I contains addresses delivered by the Presidents at its annual and special sessions, Part II has important readings representing the British point of view.

I hope that my scheme would receive the appreciation of my readers who would find here much for the purpose of their advanced study or research in this important field of modern Indian history and politics. I have drawn material from numerous sources, Indian and foreign, according to my scheme and I offer my sincere gratitude to all of them. I am thankful to a large number of my friends for the help they extended to me in the completion of this project. In particular, I am thankful to my Publishers who appreciated this project and took pains to bring out the volumes in a record time.

—J. C. Johari

INTRODUCTION

The history of India's freedom movement is virtually a brilliant account of the role of the Indian National Congress that, right from its very inception, espoused the cause of progressive and constructive nationalism. At the same time, it covers the role of the organisations that stood against the liberal and secular professions and commitments of the Congress by espousing the gospel of isolationism, exclusivism and separatism that eventually led to the path of secessionism. Though the Indian National Congress started its career as a safety-valve of the British Empire, it became 'a truly national organisation' after a couple of years so much so that Viceroy Lord Dufferin, who had blessed its birth in 1885, denigrated it in 1888 as 'India's microscopic minority' growing a seditionist character and in 1900 Viceroy Lord Curzon ardently desired to see its 'peaceful demise'. The British rulers looked at the growing influence of the Congress with great apprehension and so they took to the strategy of patronising a section of the Muslim intelligentsia to chart its own course as a counterblast to the course of the Congress. The alien rulers who did not succeed in playing the Hindus against the Muslims from whom they had snatched power, succeeded in playing a section of the Muslim intelligentsia against the Hindus that found concrete expression in the reinforcement of their policy of divide and rule by the strategy of conciliation and counterpoise of the natives against the natives. The fact stands out that while the Hindus could not be attracted by the British political machinations as they looked at the new rulers like another breed of the foreign invaders, the leaders of the Muslim intelligentsia belonging to the Aligarh School preferred the way of regaining foothold in the politics and administration by winning sympathy and patronage of the English rulers who very cautiously sought to take advantage

Muslim League Presidential Addresses

Sessions	*Dates*	*Venues*	*Presidents*	*Chairmen (Reception Committee)*
Inaugural	Dec. 30, 1906	Dacca	Nawab Salimullah Khan	Nawab Viqarul Mulk
First	Dec. 29-30, 1907	Karachi	Sir Adamjee Peerbhoy	A.M.K. Dehlvi
First (contd.)	March 18-19, 1908	Aligarh	Shah Din	Muzammil-ullah Khan
Second	Dec. 30-31, 1908	Amritsar	Syed Ali Imam	Khwaja Yusuf Shah
Third	Jan. 29-30, 1910	Delhi	Sir Ghulam Ali Khan	Hakim Mohammed Ajmal Khan
Fourth	Dec. 28-30, 1910	Nagpur	Syed Nabiullah	Khan Bahadur H. M. Malik
Fifth	March 3-4, 1912	Calcutta	Nawab Salimullah Khan	Moulvi Badruddin Hyder Khan
Sixth	March 22-23, 1913	Lucknow	Mian Muhammed Shafi	—
Seventh	Dec. 30-31, 1913	Agra	Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah	Syed Alay Nabi
Eighth	Dec. 30, 1915-Jan. 1, 1916	Bombay	Mazharul Haq	A. H. Adamjee Peerbhoy
Ninth	Dec. 30-31, 1916	Lucknow	M. A. Jinnah	Syed Nabiullah
Tenth	Dec. 30, 1917	Calcutta	Raja of Mahmudabad	Abdul Latif Ahmed

Special	Aug. 31-Sept. 1, 1918	Bombay	Raja of Mahmudabad	Sir Fazalbhoy Currimbhoy
Eleventh	Dec. 30, 1918	Delhi	A. K. Fazlul Haq	Dr. M. A. Ansari
Twelfth	Dec. 29-31, 1919	Amritsar	Hakim Muhammed Ajmal Khan	Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew
Extraordinary	Sept. 17, 1920	Calcutta	M. A. Jinnah	Hakim Maulana Abdul Rauf
Thirteenth	Dec. 30-31, 1920	Nagpur	Dr. M. A. Ansari*	——
Fourteenth	Dec. 30, 1921	Ahmedabad	Maulana Hasrat Mohani	Abbas Tyabji
Fifteenth	March 31-April 1, 1923	Lucknow	Ghulam Muhammed Bhurgri	Sheikh Shahid Hussain
Fifteenth (contd)	May 24-25,1924	Lahore	M. A. Jinnah	Agha Muhammed Safdar
Sixteenth	Dec. 30-21, 1924	Bombay	Syed Riza Ali	Sherif Deoji Canji
Seventeenth	Dec. 30-31, 1925	Aligarh	Sir Abdur Rahim	Sheikh Muhammed Abdullah

*The President-elect Maulana Muhammed Ali had been interned by the Government, hence Dr. Ansari was chosen to preside over this session.

of the conflicts and strife between the Hindus and the Muslims and to see to it that the Indians "did not combine against the British."[1] The influence of the English Principals of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh (Theodore Beck, Theodore Morrison and Archbold) over the leaders of the Aligarh Movement played a decisive part in this regard which shows, as Rajendra Prasad could evaluate in 1946, that "the history of the Muslim politics of the following 15 or 20 years is a history of these shrewd Englishmen who managed to create the gulf which with some interruptions has gone on widening ever since."[2]

Adhering to rules of politics as laid down by Machiavelli and Hobbes, the English rulers looked at the Indian Muslims as their natural enemies in view of the fact that they had snatched power from the Mughal Emperor of India. Naturally after the suppression of the great revolt, what they termed the Sepoy Mutiny, of 1857, they "turned on the Muslims as their real enemies so that the failure of the revolt was much more disastrous to them than to the Hindus."[3] Even as they succeeded in crushing the revolt, the British troops "were sewing the Muhammedans in pigskins, smearing them with pork fat, and burning their bodies."[4] The result was that the Indian Muslims not only lost their political power, they also became very weak economically and financially. Taking it into his consideration an English writer has pointed out : "A hundred and seventy years ago it was almost impossible for a well born Musalman in Bengal to become poor, at present it is almost impossible for him to continue rich."[5]

1. Rajendra Prasad : *India Divided*, p. 88.
2. *Ibid*, p. 99.
3. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada : *The Foundations of Pakistan*, Vol. I, p. xiii.
4. Garrat and Thompson : *The Rise and Fulfilment of the British Rule in India*, p. 439.
5. W. W. Hunter : *The Indian Musalmans*, p. 136. Some Muslim writers have sought to prove the guilt of the Hindus and innocence of the Muslims as a result of which the Mutiny occurred in 1857 and the Muslims had to suffer for it in the following years. For instance, Jamiluddin Ahmed says : "What happened in the Mutiny?

Such a view is subscribed to by the Western writers of modern Indian history and politics who have sought to study the events of the mid-nineteenth century and thereafter through the maxims of Machiavellian politics. Different is the stand point of Indian writers who contend that the great revolt of 1857 was a fight against the domination of an alien race in which the Hindus and the Muslims were on the same side.[6] The suppression of the revolt meant the suppression of all patriotic forces and if the Hindus could improve their position after the establishment of the rule of the Crown in 1858, it was certainly due to their improved social conditions. The new administrative set up required well educated and skilled personnel which Hindus could provide in greater numbers and this became the cause of the alienation of the Muslims from the new administrative set up. Either an act of deliberate misunderstanding of the reality of the obtaining situation or an obsession to draw conclusions on the basis of distorted facts can be traced behind all such impressions of the Western writers who insist that under the new dispensation the Muslims lost almost all their remaining traditional prestige of superiority over the Hindus; they forfeited for the time the confidence of the foreign rulers and it is from this period that we must date the loss of their numerical majority in the higher

The Hindus started it. The Muslims were restless. They jumped into the fray. The Hindus took a bath in the Ganges and went scot-free, but the Muslims and their families were ruined. The same would be the result of the Muslim participation in political agitation " *Early Phase of Muslim Political Movement*, p. 56

As Jawaharlal Nehru says : "A great deal of false and perverted history has been written about the Revolt and its suppression What the Indians think about it seldom finds its way to the printed page. Savarkar wrote *The History of the War of Indian Independence* some thirty years ago, but his book was promptly banned and is banned still. Some frank and honourable English historians have occasionally lifted the veil and allowed us a glimpse of the race mania and lynching mentality which prevailed on an enormous scale. The accounts given in Kaye and Malleson's *History of the Mutiny* and in Thompson and Garrett's *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India* make one sick with horror." *The Discovery of India*, pp. 343-44.

subordinate ranks of civil and military services."[7]

It is, therefore, obvious that if the Muslims felt like sufferers in the period following the suppression of the revolt in 1857, its real cause should be discovered in their socially and educationally backward position that was a definite consequence of their fanatical and obscurantist orientations. Syed Ahmed Khan deserves credit for diagnosing this cause and hence launching a movement for the modernisation of the Muslim community. For this sake, he had to act with great caution as well as courage. On the one hand, he faced the opposition of the traditionalists in his community and, on the other hand, he sought to win the confidence of the English rulers. As a shrewd leader he raised the bogey of Muslim separatism by repeatedly harping on the theme that in any scheme of constitutional reforms in the country the Muslims should be accorded separate representation and weightage in view of their numerically weaker position vis-a-vis the position of the Hindus.[8] At the same time, he launched the crusade of exhorting his coreligionists not to join the Indian National Congress as it was a body of the Hindus.[9] In stead in December, 1886 he founded the All-India Mohammedan Education Conference "to arouse communal consciousness and solidarity

7. Sir Verney Lovett : *A History of the Indian National Movement*, p. 14.
8. For instance, on 28 December, 1887, in a speech delivered at the Lucknow session of the All-India Mohammedan Education Conference, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan said: "They want to copy the British House of Lords. . .Now let us imagine the Viceroy's Council in this manner ... And first suppose that all the Mohammedan electors vote for a Mohammedan member and all the Hindu voters vote for a Hindu member, and now count how many votes the Mohammedan members will have and how many the Hindus It in certain that the Hindu members will have four times as many because their population is four times as numerous. Therefore, we can prove by mathematics that there will be four votes for the Hindus to every one vote for the Mohammedan. And now, how can the Muslim guard his interest ?"
9. In a letter addressed to Badruddin Tyabji, the third President of the Indian National Congress (1887), Sir Syed Ahmed Khan said : "I object to every Congress in any shape or form whatever, which regards India as one nation."

among the Muslims."[10] Just two years after he founded the Indian Patriotic Association whose first aim was "to publish and circulate pamphlets and other papers for information of the members of Parliament, English journals and the people of Great Britain in which these mis-statements will be pointed out by which the supporters of the Indian National Congress have wrongly attempted to convince the English people that all the nations of India and the Indian Chiefs and rulers agree with the aims and objects of the National Congress." On 30 December, 1893 a meeting of influential Muslims was held at the house of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in Aligarh where the need for having a wholly Muslim organisation was felt. As a result, the Mohammedan Anglo-Indian Defence Association came into being with principal aims and objects as to (i) discourage popular and political agitation among the Muslims, (ii) to lend support to measures calculated to increase the stability of the British Government and the security of the Empire, and (iii) to strive to preserve peace in India and to encourage sentiments of loyalty in the population

After the death of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in 1898 his loyal lieutenants like Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk and Nawab Mohsin-ul-mulk continued to work for the Aligarh movement. The activities of the Defence Association show that it was the true predecessor of the Muslim League and it asked for all those things which the Simla Deputation had asked for in 1906. The Muslim League had been founded in accordance with Sir Syed's scheme of a separate Muslim existence.[11] This line of Syed Ahmed Khan became the sheet-anchor of the Aligarh Movement and eventually led to the formation of a separate political party (Muslim League) in 1906. The writings and speeches of Syed Ahmed Khan leave no doubt that they "were aimed at reconciling the British rulers to their Muslim subjects. He sought to restore the confidence in his community suffering from a defeatist mentality and gave an isolationist turn to the Muslim politics of the time marked by a complete aloofness

10. Pirzada, *op. cit*, p. xxiii.
11. M. S. Jain : *The Aligarh Movement*, p. 158.

from national activity with a view to seek British patronage for the Muslims and to maintain their separate identity."[12]

The League started its career as a communal organisation. It condemned *Vande Mataram* as an idolatrous song having anti-Islamic connotation and accused some leaders of the Congress (as Tilak, Malaviya and Lajpat Rai) of preaching the gospel of Hindu nationalism in the country. They sharpened their emotional fervour by referring to the sand and dates of Arabia and to the achievements of the Muslim conquerors converting non-Islamic places (*darul harb*) into places ruled by the Muslims (*darul Islam*). In his presidential address delivered at the Amritsar session in 1908, Syed Nabiullah said : "Politically speaking, the Muhammedans of India occupy a unique position. I believe it is without a parallel in the history of the world. Close upon a thousand years ago, the Arab Mohammedans scented the desert air of sand and found its sand-mounds and date groves reminding him of Hejaz of Arabia. Since then wave upon wave of Muslim conquest has rolled the entire length and breadth of India." He went on to say that "apart from ethnic diversity of character, the two communities (Muslim and Hindu) have nothing in common in their traditional, religious, social and political conceptions." In his presidential address delivered at the Nagpur session in 1910, Syed Nabiullah said : "But what is the inner meaning of these Shivaji celebrations. Do they not convey a serious warning to all concerned ? Do they not suggest the revolt of Hinduism against Islam and by implication against foreign domination ?" The leaders hit at the *Shuddhi* and *Sangathan* movements as religious activities of the Hindus to militarise their community and to seek reconversion of the Muslims to the Hindu faith. In his presidential address delivered at the Bombay session of the League in 1924, Syed Riza Ali said : "No sane man can question the right of the followers of any creed to extend its sphere by all legitimate and proper means."

Right from its very inception, the Muslim League confined its concern to the ventilation of grievances of the Muslims and

12. Lal Bahadur : *Struggle for Pakistan*, p. 3.

to convince the British rulers with the unswerving loyalty of the Muslims to the Raj. They endorsed the partition of Bengal as it would improve the position and the prospects of the Muslims living in the eastern part of Bengal where Hindus were in a numerically weaker position. Moreover, they repeatedly advocated their argument for separate electorate system for the Muslims in any scheme of constitutional reforms. On 24 March, 1908 the League submitted a memorandum to the Viceroy expressing its reaction to the scheme for the creation of Imperial and Provincial Councils as provided in the Government of India's letter dated 24 August, 1909. In this document it was stated that the principle of class representation in the Legislative Councils was entirely in accord with the sentiments of the Muslim community. Since the Morley-Minto Reforms (Indian Councils Act of 1909) provided separate electorates to the Muslims, the League found its first efforts crowned with success. In his presidential address delivered at the Delhi session of the Muslim League in 1910, the Agha Khan said: "In the maintenance of our due share in the political life of this country and for the revival of the old-standing exclusion, which formed a bone of contention between the Hindus and Mohammedans, the separate electorates of the Muslims was deemed to be an absolute necessity."

This is the reason that the annulment of the partition of Bengal in 1911 came as "a rude shock" to the leaders of the League.[13] Subsequent events like the Balkan wars, the failure of the British Government to establish a Muslim University at Aligarh, and the patently anti-Turkish stand of the British Government during World War I and thereafter compelled to leaders of the League to revise their stand as a result of which they sought to draw closer to the Indian National Congress. Jinnah played a very important role in this regard as a result of which the Congress-League concordat could be concluded at Lucknow in 1916 whereby the two parties resolved to fight jointly for securing constitutional reforms

13. Pirzada, *op. cit.*, p. lv.

amounting to self-rule within the Empire. As a prominent figure then known for his liberal and secular commitments, Jinnah said these words at the League session held at Dacca in 1917 : "This country is not to be governed by the Hindus, and let me submit that it is not to be governed by the Muslims either, and certainly not by the English. It is to be governed by the people and the sons of the country."

And yet the League did not relent to forsake its coveted reward in the form of separate electorates granted under the Act of 1909. In its zeal to soften the attitude of the League, the Congress preferred to make a pact with the League at the expense of its declared stand with the hope that things would change for the better in time to come. Both parties plunged themselves into constitutional struggle for freedom. It appears that "from 1915 till about 1922 the League and the Congress continued to speak and act in unison."[14] But this union of the incompatibles failed to last long. After the bitter failure of the Khilafat movement, the League leaders returned to their old path and a great Muslim leader like Maulana Mohammed Ali, who had the chance to preside over the Cocanada session of the Congress (1923), said many bad things after a couple of years about the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The distrust of the Muslim League leaders in the thoughts and deeds of the Hindus became once more sharply evident when Sir Abdur Rahim in his presidential address delivered at the Aligarh session held in 1925 said : "Hindus have by their provocative and aggressive conduct, made it clearer than ever that Muslims cannot entrust their fate to them and must adopt every possible means of self-defence. Some Hindu leaders have even spoken of driving Muslims out of India as Spaniards had expelled the Moors."

It is often said that both the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League started their career with affirmations and reaffirmations of loyalty to the British Raj. Such an over-simplification of the situation is not warranted by a correct understanding of the role of the two organisations.

14. *Ibid.*, p. lx.

The real line of distinction between the two organisations should be traced in the fact that while the Congress leaders fulfilled the hope of Hume by contributing to the rise and growth of 'sane and loyal nationalism' and that within a couple of years developed the traits of secular and contructive nationalism, the League leaders did it with a resolve to win the sympathy of the English rulers so as to dispel the complex of fear, hate and distrust. The real meaning of this loyalty was not to win swaraj or self-rule in any form but to see the perpetuation of the British Raj as the best way to dispel the prospects of the apprehended Hindu Raj in India that would occur after the termination of the foreign rule. In his presidential address delivered at the Lucknow session of the League in 1913, Main Muhammed Shafi said : "In my humble judgment it is the paramount duty of every loyal subject of the King-Emperor to abstain from doing anything calculated to impair the permanence and stability of the British rule in India." Moreover, while the Congress leaders changed their line of thought and action in the real direction after cutting out their teeth, the leaders of the League adhered to their own line and in return they enventually got the reward in the form of a sovereign homeland of the Muslims. The period of five years (1918-23) may be taken as an exception when the League was caught up in the dilemma of loyalty to the Raj versus loyalty to the faith.

After the bitter failure of the Khilafat movement, the League returned to its old line and served the purpose of the English rulers in being a counterblow to the growing strength of the Indian National Congress. The English rulers at no stage doubted the loyalty of the League or thought about its peaceful end. They well understood the meaning of the first proclaimed aim of the League that was "to promote among the Muslims of India, feelings of loyalty to the British Government and to remove any misconceptions that may arise as to the intention of Government with regard to any of its measures." Facts illustrate that the League remained steadfast to the way shown by Syed Ahmed Khan even in the face of changing times and circumstances. We may,

therefore, endorse this view : 'The Muslim policy under Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's leadership. dictated by a sheer fear of British oppression, had been one of loyalty and abject flattery. This policy was inherited by what is called the Aligarh School as a matter of tradition, though the conditions that inspired it had ceased to exist."[15]

Happily, the addresses delivered by M.A. Jinnah, Hakim Mohammed Ajmal Khan, Dr. M.A. Ansari and Maulana Hasrat Mohani are not informed by communal or sectarian orientations. In very strong terms they condemned the provisions of the repressive law and the tragedy of the Jallianwala Bagh. They also lent full and unstinted support to the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity and securing of constitutional reforms in the direction of self-rule in the country. In his presidential address delivered at the Lucknow session of the League in 1916 Jinnah raised a pertinent question about the fitness of the Indians for freedom and then answered it in very clear and affirmative terms : "We who are present here today know full well that from the Indian standpoint, there can be but one answer." Here appeared the voice of reason that could have its confluence with the voice of the Indian National Congress and so under the leadership of Jinnah the Lucknow Pact could become a reality. However, this, may be regarded as the voice of the minority which failed to cohere with the ideology of the Muslim League. For this reason it lost its significance in time to come when Jinnah himself became the arch-priest of the two-nation theory and the maker of the partition of India.

—J.C. Johari

15. F.K. Khan Durrani : *The Meaning of Pakistan*, p. 78.

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Part II : BRITISH COLONIAL INTERPRETATIONS AND PRONOUNCEMENTS

PART I

MUSLIM LEAGUE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES (1907-1925)

TARANA

Cheen-o-Arab hamara, Hindostan hamara,
Muslim hain, hum watan hain, sara jahan hamara,
Teghon ke sai men hum pal kar jawan hue hain,
Khanjar hilal ka hai kaumi nishan hamara.

English Rendering :

China and Arabia are ours, India is ours,
We are Muslims, we are natives, all world is ours,
Under the shadow of the swords we have grown up,
The crescent-like dagger is our national symbol.

—Muhammed Iqbal

1

UNIMPEACHABLE LOYALTY TO BRITIBH RULE*

Gentlemen, I thank you most heartily for the great honour you have done me in selecting me to preside over your deliberations at this second gathering of the All-India Muslim League. I can only say that this is one of the proudest moments of my life and that the memory of the honour you have done me, will never fade from my mind.

I need hardly tell you that this is only the second occasion on which this League has met. Its first public appearance was in December last year at Dacca when that great son of our patriotic community, Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, occupied the presidential chair. The success of that first effort was all that we could naturally expect. Its proceedings were reported throughout the British Empire, and in the great London Press there were inspiring comments and criticisms which not only indicated that the movement had the widest sympathy of all well-wishers of the Mohammedans, but has imposed upon us the duty of developing this organization to its fullest possible extent.

If any doubt has ever existed, and I know of none, that the Mohammedans of India would fail in their duty to themselves, the gathering here to-day, the leaders of our people, the men in whom we put our trust and who are writing a memorable page in our history indicates in no uncertain way that the message has gone to the heart of the people, and we have at length awakened to the stern necessity of guarding our interests and advancing our cause. I have said that the first public evidence of our consolidation was given at Dacca, but the initiation of

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*Presidential address delivered by Sir Adamjee Peerbhoy at the Karachi Session held on 29-30 December, 1907.

this movement goes a little further back. I know nothing which has been more productive of concrete results for the benefit of ourselves than that great and memorable national deputation which in October 1906, went to Simla and laid before H.E. Lord Minto the Petition embodying our national sentiments and aspirations. It will always be a matter of keen regret to me that circumstances denied me the honour and happiness of proceeding to Simla with the deputation, but I have some slight satisfaction in the fact that my own kith and kin, my son Ebrahim, together with Maulvi Rafi-ud-din Ahmad, represented this part of India.

This splendid courtesy with which that deputation was received by H.E. the Viceroy, inspired the Mommedans throughout India with complete confidence. His speech in reply to our memorial was a statesman-like utterance and the very words of it are engraven indelibly on our memory. It breathed confidence, and whilst it committed neither His Excellency nor his Government to any particular line of action, we knew that the great interests of Mohammedans would never be lightly set aside or suffer neglect. Concrete evidence of that fact has already been given in the schemes suggested by the Government of India for the improvement of the representation of the people on the Legislative Council, which regulates the affairs of India.

As I desired to say, the initiation of the League dates from that visit. You know as well as I do that the deputation was headed by His Highness the Aga Khan. The leader of our community is still young in years, but I only speak what we all have in our minds when I say we have hopes of his rendering us still higher services in the future. With him was the lamented late Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, the Honorary Secretary of the deputation, to whom I must refer again. The first practical work was the formation of the plans for the organization of this League. It first met at Dacca in the east and was pronounced a success. It has met again here at Karachi in the west, the greatest city of Sindh, the centre of Islam, and as I look round me to-day, I can only express my surprise that a young movement has so quickly found the heart of our people

and touched us with one common object, the advancement of our historic people. What the future has in store for the League I dare not prognosticate; but if the same spirit which animates us to-day guides its destinies, it will not be long before our rulers, and Mohammedans the world over, will look to the proceedings of this League for knowledge of our aspirations and the correct measure of our advancement along the paths we are destined to preceed. I appeal to every Mohammedan in India to realize this important fact, to do all in his power to add to the strength of the League, to understand its aims and objects, and to render it that practical support without which it can do nothing. We have ventured to draw the attention of the whole of India upon us; we have elected to give evidence to our rulers that we are a community imbued with high ambitions, and we have thus imposed upon ourselves a task from which we dare not shrink. We have taken a step forward; to go back would be to drop into oblivion and stamp ourselves as unworthy of the place we demand in the British Empire. I cannot dwell on this aspect of our duty too long or with too much earnestness. What is our first duty to this end ? It is to be united in ourselves, to be of one mind and one purpose. We must of all things discard sectional jealousies and personal animosities; two evils which are capable of cankering the heart of the sublimest purpose. We must look to the good of the community as a whole : work shoulder to shoulder as true children of Islam. We are putting in the foundations of a mighty structure. Let us do good work.

My duty to-day, gentlemen, is to direct your energies to the consideration of those highly important subjects on which you will be called upon to express an opinion. They are momentous in all consideration, and whilst I have no intention of impressing upon you any particular views of my own, I ask you to proceed with moderation and with a due recognition of the responsibility placed upon you. It is scarcely necessary for me to say that I have but a poor knowledge of the paths of political controversy. I am no scholar nor a man of many words. My sphere of action in this life has been cast in an entirely different direction. Since the time when nature made it possible for me to turn my hand to toil, I have laboured, and I

must admit I still have much affection for the man who uses his energies in that direction. But I do not wish to be misunderstood. I do not despise those who lobour in other fields. There is work for us all. Circumstances have compelled me to direct my energies into the paths of industrialism and no higher duty could be placed upon an individual. I believe in the dignity of labour as the great Prophet did. The history of our people, the history of our heroes and of those who have carried the flag of Islam over the world has been one of strenuous and ceaseless effort. Whatever we may have lacked in recent times in purely literary accomplishments, no one can charge the Mohammedan with not doing his fair share of the world's work. In India he has shown his special aptitude in industrialism, and I believe it is along these lines that he can best exert his influence and carve for himself a high position in the Empire. I love to see the development of Mohammedan enterprise, for it is a true measure of the energy and spirit of the people and we can never be without hope so long as we can maintain the reputation we have already earned. The history of the British people has shown that industrialism leads the way and on that foundation they built the great superstructure of the arts. We, above all others, cannot afford to neglect higher education, for our people must take their part in the responsibilities of Government and the advancement of all such movements as require the energies of trained intelligence. It gave me particular satisfaction two years ago, at the time of the memorable visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and his beloved consort, to show that I was capable of appreciating work in another sphere by, in some slight measure, assisting to found the Science School in connection with the Aligarh College.

It will be your duty, gentlemen, to turn your attention to highly important matters arising out of the proposed reforms in connection with the Indian Legislative Councils. I have no wish to impress upon you any ideas of my own, or to anticipate the decisions at which you may ultimately arrive. For myself, I must say that I received the news of the decision of Government, to reply to popular agitation by a considerable expansion of the principle of the Legislative Council, with every satisfac-

tion. And this was enhanced by the fact that the Government has seen its way to recognize our prayer in the memorial addressed to H.E. Lord Minto, and safeguard the interests of the Mohammedans by providing class representation. As you are aware, the proposed reforms provide that there shall be a minimum of four Mohammedan representatives in the Imperial Council. Whether that number is adequate or not will be for you to say, but we must be grateful to the Viceroy and the Government of India for the recognition of those claims we specifically set out in our memorial. It indicates that the Government is prepared to listen to the popular voice, and if this attitude is carried still further and influences the Government in its nomination of suitable men to represent us we shall have little to complain of. We must as far as possible preclude the monopolization of these appointments by those who have only personal ends to serve and encourage and stimulate our rising young men to exert their talents and energies for the good of their community. In the provincial councils, the same provisions for Mohammedan representation are made, and if we can only infuse into provincial governments the spirit which has animated the Government of India and the Secretary of State in dealing with our just and moderate claims, our labours will be considerably lightened. It is necessary for us to remember the wisdom expressed by Lord Minto to the deputation which waited on him at Simla. He said, "I agree with you, gentlemen, that the initial rungs in the ladder of self-government are to be found in the municipal and district boards, and that it is in that direction that we must look for gradual political education of the people." I am in full accord with those words and it is in this direction that our real labour must commence. When we learn to control our parochial surroundings, we can lay claim to adding our influence to imperial policy.

Another point in the memorial was the matter of the adequate employment of Mohammedans in the higher branches of the public service. We were told in the past that we lacked competence. That reproach can no longer be fairly brought against us in these days. We have in our midst educated Mohammedans who have fitted themselves for all responsible

positions in the administration, and certainly our traditions show that we have always been faithful to any administrative trust reposed in us. It will be part of your duties, gentlemen, to discuss this matter, and I trust you will be able to add such weight to your words that the Government will adequately respond to your legitimate claims.

Our loyalty to the Government has never yet been impeached, and I trust it never will. But when a vast community sets itself to work to bring about its regeneration, its methods must be precise and open to no misconstruction. We recognise the difficulties of the Government in adjusting conflicting claims, but we must be as fearless as we are honest in our criticisms, whoever and whatever they may affect. So far as I know, the Government of India is the last to complain of criticism so long as it is fair, moderate and upright.

As you know, the third object of our League is to prevent, as far as possible, the rise of hostile feelings between the different communities in India. With that object I am in complete sympathy, for it passes my understanding why the Mohammedans should in the advancement of their own interests injure those of any other people. We contribute to the common good by improving our own surroundings. It is no part of the purpose of this League to oppose the progress of other communities or to be aggressive towards them in any direction whatever. We respect all who work for the common good of the country.

I mentioned in opening my address the name of the late Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk. His death at such a time was a great blow to our community. Never were his services more needed than at the present time. He worked strenuously for the success of the deputation to Simla and it is some slight satisfaction to know that he saw at least the first fruits of his labours. His work was universally approved, for he had but one single object, and that the steady progress of his people. We have need of many such patriots and I cannot do better than ask our young men to study his life and works and let them be an example to follow.

The late Nawab has been succeeded as Secretary of the Aligarh College by Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk Bahadur. The wisdom of that appointment is fully indicated in the fact that it was unanimous. I know of no one more capable of wearing the mantle of the late Secretary than his present successor. His past labours have all been for the good of his people and Mohammedans may congratulate themselves that the Nawab has consented to take up the work at Aligarh.

I have but lightly touched upon those subjects with which you will be called upon to deal. I can offer you but small guidance in your deliberations, but my heart and soul is with you, and I pray with all the earnestness of an old man that God will direct your energies and lead ;you into the paths of righteousness and wisdom.

2

BRITISH RULE AND MUSLIM SOLIDARITY*

Gentlemen, I thank you heartily for the great honour you have conferred upon me by asking me to preside at your deliberations on the occasion of this the first Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League held after its constitution was passed last March. To occupy the position with which you have favoured me to-day, is to my mind, a proud privilege and, however unworthily I may possess it, I wish to assure you that the present moment is the proudest in my life. The political conditions that affect the Musalmans of India bristle with problems of much gravity; it is, therefore, greatly to be regretted that unforeseen circumstances have deprived this gathering of the presence amongst us of a leader of such exceptional ability as Syed Amir Ali, C.I.E., His vast learning, mature views and ardent love of Islam and Muslims entitle him to rank as one of foremost Indian Musalmans of the day, eminently fitted to give the right direction to the political energy of our community.

You will miss in your deliberations on the present occasion the masterly guidance of a savant, an erudite scholar and a profund thinker. Under the circumstances, I keenly feel the weight of the responsibility placed on my shoulders for having been called upon to preside in this assembly. Political deliberations require much clearness of vision, foresight, temperate and dispassionate language, exactness of expression, sagacity, judgment, a genuine regard for the view of the opponent and no less an appreciation of the points of his case. Overwhelmed with the conviction of my own shortcomings, I am buoyed up with the

*Presidential address delivered by Syed Ali Imam at the Amritsar session held on 30-31 December, 1908,

confidence that the assembly in which I have the honour to preside to-day represents the intense earnestness, the high aspirations, and the elevating ideal of a community that, for all its numerical inferiority, in rich in quality of race and traditions of political perception and administrative ability. I feel assured that on the task that you have set to yourselves, the political development of your community, you will bring to bear in our proceedings the sobriety, the patience and the wisdom which are the forerunners of the success of any undertaking.

Politically speaking, the Mohammedans of India occupy a unique position. I believe it is without a parallel in the history of the world. Close upon a thousand years ago, the Arab Mohammedan scented the desert air of Sind and found its sand-mounds and date-groves reminding him of Hejaz, of Arabia Felix. Since then wave upon wave of Muslim conquest has rolled over the entire length and breadth of India. In serried ranks, Musalman Royal Houses rose and fell, but Muslim domination of the country remained more or less an unbroken chain, till in comparatively more recent times supremacy hung in the balance between the Marhatta spear and the British bayonet. Islam, in its world-wide career of conquest and conversion, met on Indian soil with a resistance which had little of the admirable military prowess of the Hindus. What Hindu chivalry was powerless to protect, Hindu ethics, Hindu philosophy and Hindu social system had made impregnable. Centuries rolled by but the conqueror and the conquered in point of nationality, character and creed suffered not from their political association. Characteristics of race and religion and political and social ideals of the two presented irreconcilabilities. Quranic teaching throws open wide the door of coversion with equal right and liberty, social and political, to the new-comer. His entrance into the botherhood of Islam is a passport to all that is the highest and the best in that community. Islam is expansive, has the capacity to hold all nations in its embrace. Hinduism inculcates a tenacious adherence to a faith that is not proselytizing, that has encased itself within the rigidity of the caste-system and that has no catholicity. To be a Hindu one has

to be born one. Birth imposes no limitations on the Muslim. The methods of theological thought of the two communities are totally different The Muslim's severely puritanical unitarian idea of the Godhead stands in violent contrast with the beautiful but crowded mythology of the Hindu. In the East, religion enters into the very life of the people. Its permeates the fabric of society, supplies the spring of individual action in everyday life, and dominates habits of thought in a measure unknown to the West. The social relations of the Indian Muslim and the Hindu have not yet received the geniality of a common dinner-table nor the sacrament or legal sanction of matrimony. The two communities, from the truly social point of view, are as far apart to-day as they were a thousand years ago. Time has not worn out any of the angularities that characterized their social systems when they first came face to face. Similarly, some of their political methods have been distinct. The two communities have different notions of sovereignty. The Musalman sovereign presides in the council chamber, leads at prayer, and commands in the battlefield. He is at once the head of the State and the Church. The Hindu monarch considered it a privilege, under religious obligation, to kiss the Brahmin's toe. The Hindu Rajah has an overlord in the authority of the hierarchy. Papal Bulls had not the same terror for the crowned heads of Christian Europe as the frown of the Brahmin for Hindu chief.

It is clear, therefore, that, apart from ethnic diversity of character, the two communities have nothing in common in their traditional, religious, social and political conceptions. There must be something imperishable in the cherished beliefs of both. Each has so far passionately clung to its own. Indeed there is much in Hinduism that evokes admiration. It is indestructible. It is perfect and complete in itself. Its foundation is laid in the innermost recesses of the sentiments and emotions of its people. It is a magnificently organized system, each part in faultless co-ordination with the rest. Hidebound, it has lived down the influence of ages of alien rule. On the other hand, the vitality and robustness of Islamic principle made it impossible for the conqueror to be absorbed in the civilization of the land where he had come to stay. The soul-stirring prea-

ching that followed the descent of the Great Prophet from Mount Hera has given mankind the essence of a rational and living faith. The trumpet call of Mohammad to duty, to righteousness, to Islam have left undying echoes. Under such conditions the fusion of the two, Hinduism and Islam, could not be predicated. The verdict of history is that, in holding India under subjection for centuries, the Mohammedan held only her body and not her soul. For political ends, for the happiness of the country as a whole and the formation of a flourishing commonwealth, the relation of the two communities was anomalous and out of joint. The keen-sighted statesmanship of the great Akbar saw this and aimed at unification by conciliation, compromise and concession in religious, social and political directions. A long and tolerant reign of about 50 years proved the failure of the experiment. Unification demands absorption and obliteration of the old landmarks of differences and divergences. The imperial reformer at best achieved a friendly understanding with his Hindu subjects, which resulted more from the consciousness of a just liberal government than any acceptance of the ethics of Islam or its religious, social and political principles. The innate difference of creed and character, of race and tradition, and of social and political ideas remained ready to spring into active hostility as soon as a favourable opportunity presented itself. Aurangzeb saw, no less than his great-grandfather, the political necessity of unification. He adopted, however, the desperate and hazardous method of religious intolerance and forcible conversion. The experiment failed again. Prejudices and practices of both the communities, sanctified by the observance of ages, defied cohesion. Persuasion and persecution equally proved futile. With the weakening of administrative control, the Musalman found himself isolated. New Hindu powers rose in rebellion round the tottering throne of the Mogul. The strife had all the character of a crusade, and the disruption was but the reflexion of the irreconcilability of Hinduistic with Islamic conceptions.

It was at this period when the country was torn and bleeding, when sectarian passions and prejudices had leapt up from their hidden lairs, and when Islam, whatever of it that was in India, was on the brink of an inglorious annihilation, that an

inscrutable providence ordained the advent of a power that gave the country peace and religious toleration, that vanquished the forces of anarchy and disorder, and that introduced a form of government that paralysed the hand of fanaticism. The coming of the British into the country was the signal for Hinduism and Islam to retire, each within its own limits. It gave the land a strong and well-ordered form of administration that respects the personal law and religious principles and prejudices of all communities so long as they do not interfere with the general peace of the country. It is idle to deny that, however fortuitously, one immediate manifestation of British rule in India was the complete immunity the Indian Musalmans received from the not unnatural but fierce resentment of the Hindu. A new era dawned on the destinies of the vast continent of India, a morning full of promise and hope, of intellectual advancement and material prosperity. The impact of the Western methods of administration, the characteristically generous desire to govern in deference to popular views and the inauguration of a high-souled policy of public instruction, have created in the last 50 years aspirations and political perceptions which the people of India had never felt before. A free press, and till very recently an irresponsible press, public speaking, and similarly till very recently an unrestrained public speaking, have engendered indefinite and vague ideas of home rule, self-government, autonomy and *Swaraj* among many other political conundrums that have brought about an unrest which has in the present day occupied the anxious thoughts of many friends of India, both among the rulers and the ruled. It is impossible for a thoughtful man to approach the subject without regard to the pathetic side of the present situation. It is the liberalism of the great British nation that has taught Indians, through the medium of English education, to admire democratic institutions, to hold the rights of the people sacred above all rights, and to claim for their voice first place in the government of the country. The mind of close-upon three generations of the educated classes in the land has been fed on the ideas of John Stuart Mill, Milton, Burke, Sheridan and Shelley, has been filled with the great lessons obtainable from chapters of the constitutional history of England, and has been influenced by inexpressible

considerations arising out of the American War of Independence, the relation of Great Britain with her colonies, and last, though not least, the grant of autonomy to the Boers after their subjugation at an enormous sacrifice of men and money. The bitterest critic of the educated Indian will not hold him to blame for his present state of mind.

It is the English who have carefully prepared the ground and sown the seed that has germinated into what some of them are now disposed to consider to be noxious weed. It will be a dwarfed imagination, however, that will condemn the educational policy of the large-hearted and liberal-minded Englishmen who laid its foundation in this country. Those who inaugurated it aimed at raising the people to the level where co-operation and good understanding between the rulers and the ruled is possible. Under the circumstances, the desire of the educated Indian to take a prominent part in the administration of his country is neither unnatural nor unexpected. The gracious proclamation of Her Late Majesty Queen Victoria, our loved and revered Malaka Moazzama, issued in 1858, contributed in no small measure to give shape to Indian aspirations. Among other messages of hope and peace not the least luminous was that her subjects of "whatever race or creed should be freely and impartially admitted to offices in her service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity duly to discharge." Since the promulgation of this Proclamation the country has enjoyed the inestimable blessings of internal peace. Education has taken long strides, commercial enterprise has shown enormous activity, industrial, agricultural and economic resources have developed, sanitation has improved, free medical aid has been brought within the reach of all, and the administration of the Public Works Department has been a monumental success. Railways and canals, roads, and bridges and postal and telegraphic facilities have annihilated distance and brought distant provinces of the country within intelligent touch of each other. High offices of State, both administrative and judicial, have been filled by Indians. Bengal has seen the highest Executive Office next to the Lieutenant-Governor and the highest Judicial Office next to no one held

by Indians. A liberal Secretary of State has reserved two seats on his Council for Indians, and the selection of the Honourable Syed Husain Bilgrami, C.S.I., to represent our community in that august assembly is a recognition of his towering personality among the Musalmans of India. It is a selection of which we are justly proud. There are expectations in the near future of the appointment of an Indian to the membership of the Executive Council of the Viceroy, and I have no doubt the country can furnish men of the necessary education, ability and intergrity duly to discharge the duties of the Viceregal colleague. As long as there are men of the necessary accomplishment amongst us, our community need not despair of seeing its representative occupy the proposed place. Recent appointments of Indian Musalmans to high judicial posts in different provinces of the country is indicative of the desire of the Government to co-operate with the Indian Musalmans in the work of administration with as much willingness and cordiality as with other communities. Given the necessary qualification of education, ability and integrity, the protection of the special interests of the Mohammedans demands their admission to high offices of State. Where the requisite efficiency is forthcoming, it is but the adjustment of political balance to admit Indians of all races and creeds to the public service. His Excellency the Viceroy very rightly emphasized the wisdom of this principle when in his speech in the Council on the occasion of the passing of the Sedition Bill he gave expression to these words : "I repudiate once for all the insinuation that has sometimes reached me that the Government of India has for political reasons favoured the interests of one community against those of another. It has been the pride of the British Raj to balance without prejudice the claims of nationalities, of religions and of castes. It will continue to do so." It is clear therefore that, while developing the material resources of the country, the Government has not been regardless of its duty to invite and to admit the people of the country to share the responsibilities of administration. The grant of local self-government, the concession of the right of interpellation, the recognition of popular associations and corporations to send their representatives to the Legislative Chambers of the country, the tendency to

encourage useful discussion in budget speeches, and the keen desire to take the natural leaders of the people into the confidence of Government before a measure is passed into law, are but emphatic expression of appreciation of the popular element in the transaction of the affairs of State. With fostering care, for years the Government has from time to time introduced institutions and encouraged methods that have abundantly furnished opportunity for political training.

Above all, one not the least remarkable development of the results of British occupation of the country is that India has come to acquire a common language. English is now a common medium of exchange of ideas from one end of the country to the other. It has drawn the myriad races and communities of India closer together than ever before. Material, intellectual and political activities have brought about conditions of which the educated Indian is the embodiment. Hindu or Mohammedan, Parsee or Christain, intellectually the educated Indians have drawn nourishment from one and the same feeding-bottle, the great liberalizing influence of the great British race. With all the theological, social and ethnic differences between communities in India, it is futile to question the fact that the educated Indians, of whatever race they may be, have acquired a common attitude of thought relating to the land of their birth. There seems to be unanimity in the sentiment of love for the mother country. The passion to serve her to advance her material and moral prosperity and to ameliorate her general condition, has taken firm root in the breast of the educated Indians. We, the educated Musalmans of India, have no less love for the land of our birth than the members of the other communities inhabiting the country. India is not only the land of our birth, we are tied to her by the sacred association of ages. We yield to none in veneration of and affection for our motherland. All our hopes and all our aspirations are wrapped up in the general advancement of our country, and advancement all along the line, giving protection and preferment to all her children alike without any invidious distinction. England may well be congratulated on the success of the result of her undertaking.

It was a proud moment when last June at the Indian Civ ii

Service dinner in London, Lord Morley made reference to the awakening in India. Addressing his hosts, His Lordship said: "It would be idle to deny that there is at this moment, and there has been for some little time past, and very likely there will be for some time to come, a living movement in the mind of those people for whom you are responsible. A living movement and a movement for what? A movement for objects which we ourselves have all taught them to think desirable objects." It has gratefully to be acknowledged that British rule has given the peoples of India a common platform where they can come together, and from where it is possible for them to proclaim a broad-based patriotism that will hold in loving solicitude the interests of all the races and creeds that inhabit our vast country.

From the point of view of race and creed, two communities only stand forth most prominently out of the large group that forms the Indian population. These two are the great Hindu community, embracing nearly four-fifths of the inhabitants of British India, and the no less important community, the Musalmans of India, that make up between one-fifth and one-fourth of the entire population. True, the significance of the Indian Musalmans in point of number, though over 62 millions, is not very large when compared with the number of their Hindu countrymen. But the uncivilized portions of the country classified as Hindu take away in no small measure from the strength of the Hindu community as a numerical majority, and thereby accord the Musalmans a larger proportion to the real Hindu majority. The importance of the Musalmans of India, however, if not based in their comparative numerical strength, is incalculably great on grounds of political considerations, as was pointed out in the Address presented by the famous Mohammedan Deputation at Simla two years ago to His Excellency the Viceroy, Lord Minto. That Address, in urging the claims of the Mohammedan community, drew attention to "the value of the contribution which they make to the defence of the Empire", as also to "the position which they occupied in India a little more than a hundred years ago, and of which the traditions have naturally not faded from their minds". His Excellency's reply dealing with the position taken in the Address recognized its

validity in these words : "You justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength but in respect to the political importance of your community and the service it has rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you." But, gentlemen, it is not necessary that the political importance of the Indian Musalmans should be, as it has been, ratified by Viceregal utterances. Our Hindu countrymen have paid us the just compliment, time after time, to say that their great organization, the Indian National Congress, remains incomplete as a political agency without the Musalmans freely participating in its activities. In the last 23 years, leaders of that assembly have been at great pains to draw the Musalmans of India to their annual deliberations. Indeed, from about September when the sittings of the Congress are about to be held, the political importance of Musalman co-operation is openly preached. Exhortations from the platform rend the air and publications from the press carry far and wide to Musalmans the invitation to join. The reasons why the Musalmans of India have not responded to the appeal of the Congress leaders, I will dwell upon later.

I am at this stage of my discourse concerned with impressing upon you the consideration that you are a great community, that in the political affairs of the country you hold a place of unique importance, and it is your duty to realize fully the responsibility attaching to the position you occupy. Indifference to the political developments of the country and disregard of the phase through which these developments are passing are not possible any more. Side by side with the political activities of the Indian National Congress, the educational activity of the Musalmans has proceeded at no ordinary pace. It was stimulated thanks to the efforts of the Mohammedan Association by the well-known Government Resolution of 1885, which secures state encouragement to education among the Mohammedan and their employment in the Public Service. Consecration of life-long devotion to the cause by private individuals was not wanting. The genuis of our Grand Old Man, the Late Sir Syed, the burning eloquence of his late coadjutor, our Mehdi, the untiring energy of our Mushtaq, the inspiring songs of Hali,

the thoughtful writings of Nazir Ahmad, end the learned disquisitions of Shbily have done their work. They spurred on the Mohammedans to take to Western learning and their efforts have been crowned with success, and the inevitable result is that the younger generation of Indian Musalmans is not in a frame of mind to eschew politics. It may be, it is not yet, in the words of Lord Morley, "intoxicated with the ideas of freedom, of nationality and self-government", but, I say, it has sipped the strong wine of the intellectual vintage of Mill and Burke. It was some consideration of this sort that prompted a significant statement in the Simla Deputation Address : "Recent events have stirred up feelings, specially among the younger generation of Mohammedans, which might, in certain circumstances and under certain contingencies, easily pass beyond the control of temperate counsel and sober guidance." The Mohammedan community, I feel persuaded, is confronted with problems of great political import.

One of the questions that the community had before it was whether its political requirements in relation to Government and to its countrymen of other races and creeds called for a separate political organization The answer to this has been the founding of the All-India Muslim League. It is nearly a decade since Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk Bahadur called an informal meeting of leading Mohammedans of India at the house of my esteemed friend Mr. Hamid Ali Khan of Lucknow. I was present in that meeting. After the necessary deliberations, the gathering broke up and all of us who had taken part in it felt the absolute necessity of a political organization of our own. Two years ago that necessity became an urgent call which terminated in the Simla Deputation. On the occasion of the Deputation, advantage was taken of such a representative gathering, and the 35 signatories to the Address formed a band for the political organization of their people. A few months later, under the hospitality of that generous nobleman, the noble Premier of East Bengal, the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca, the foundation was laid. Last year Karachi saw that prince of merchants, Sir Adamji Peerbhoy, deliver the inaugural address. It was there that the constitution was framed, which an

Extraordinary Sitting of the League passed last March at Aligarh; thereafter the acceptance of the presidential chair of the League by His Highness the Aga Khan was universally acclaimed by Indian Musalmans as the pledge of the stability of the organization. The presence of representative Musalmans from all the different parts of India in our gathering to-day is an assurance that the community has realized its political responsibility and that it is answerable for stwardship to the younger generation both within itself and without. We identify ourselves with all that aims at the general advancement of the true interests of the country. We have a rooted conviction that the true interests of the country lie in the maintenance of cordial relations among the Indian communities, and that the true political ideal is the one that aims at peaceful progress of such a national character as subserves the protection and advancement of the interests of all dominations.

Gentlemen, I claim for the League responsibility for working out political amelioration not only for the Musalmans but for all races that inhabit our beloved country, India. I assert that ours is not a mission narrowed down to self-seeking and sectarian aggression. I repudiate the suggestion that the League is in opposition to other political organizations of the country and that it has given a blank cheque to the Government. We reserve the right of frankly, fearlessly and boldly criticizing the measures of Government ; we reserve the right to protest, howsoever respectfully, against the continuance of certain of its methods ; we reserve the right to refuse to believe in the soundness of a particular policy of it ; and we also reserve the right of standing shoulder to shoulder with our brethren of our denominations when we find our country suffering under a real grievance. But at the same time we declare that in our relation with Government we will not permit malice to cross our path, warp our judgement and create disaffection.

Gentlemen, in these days of political tribulation and unrest, professions of loyalty stand on slippery ground. But this I will say that, apart from ethical aspects of loyalty to the British Crown, the best sense of the country recognizes the fact that the progress of India rests on the maintenance of order and

internal peace, and that order and internal peace, in view of the conditions obtaining in our country at present and for a very long time to come, immeasureably long time to come, spell British occupation. British occupation not in the thin and diluted form in which Canada, Australia and South Africa stand in relation to England, but British occupation in the sense in which our country has enjoyed internal peace during the last 50 years. Believe me that as long as we have not learnt to overcome sectarian aggressiveness, to rise above prejudices based on diversity of races, religions and languages, and to alter the alarming conditions of violent intellectual disparity among the peoples of India, so long British occupation is the principal element in the progress of the country. The need of India is to recognize that true patriotism lies in taking measure of the conditions existing in fact and devoting oneself to amelioration. Idealism may be enchanting but has little place in practical politics.

The idealistic *Swaraj*, as understood in the light of a Calcutta High Court ruling, is a fascinating picture, but their Lordships who delivered that judgement were not concerned with the political inadaptability of the moral it teaches; they were concerned only with the question whether it teaches any thing unlawful. Now, no one can claim that to advocate the grant of *Swaraj* to India as understood by their Lordships is unlawful or treasonable, but I do think that there are strong and valid reasons to hold that it will be biggest political blunder for the peoples of India to ask, and the British Parliament to grant, it in the near or even the measurably remote future. I admit it is difficult to detect treason if the self-government of the idealist is, as put by that eminent countryman of ours, Dr. Rash Behari Ghose, "autonomy within the Empire and not absolute independence". But, gentlemen, the entire population of India is not made up of lawyers nor is it concerned with legal subtleties. What disastrous consequences may not flow by the lay public acquiring notions of *Swaraj* without the capacity to understand the technicalities on which their Lordship's decision is based. *Swaraj* or self-government, autonomy or a self-governing Member of the Empire, in other words, home rule under the aegis

of the British Crown in India, is possible only when racial, religious, social and intellectual disparities are removed, and a fusion has levelled down characteristics of separate denominations to a plane where the pulsations of a common national life are the most prominent features.

I cannot say what you think, but when I find the most advanced province of India put forward the sectarian cry of '*Bande Mataram*' as the national cry, and the sectarian *Rakhi-bandhan* as a national observance, my heart is filled with despair and disappointment; and the suspicion that, under the cloak of nationalism, Hindu nationalism is preached in India becomes a conviction. Has the experiment tried by Akbar and Aurangzeb failed again? Has 50 years of the peaceful spread of English education given the country only a revival of denominationalism ? Gentlemen, do not misunderstand me. I believe that the establishment of conferences, associations and corporate bodies in different communities on denominational lines are necessary to give expression to denominational views, so that the builders of a truly national life in the country may have before them the crystallized needs and aspirations of all sects. In this connection, every lover of India will welome such institutions as the Kayestha Conference, the Bhuinhar Conference, the Rajput Conference, Mohammedan *anjumans* and conferences, the associations of the domiciled community, and all such denominational institutions. Such activities help to bring into focus the thoughts of all sections of the population of India. Regard for the feelings and sentiments, needs and requirements of all is the key-note to true Indian nationalism. It is far more imperative where the susceptibilities of the two great communities, Hindus and Musalmans, are involved. Unreconciled, one will be as great a drag on the wheel of national progress as the other. I ask the architects of Indian nationalism, both in Calcutta and Poona, do they expect the Musalmans of India to accept '*Bande Mataram*' and the Sivaji Celebration ? The Mohammedans may be weak in anything you please, but they are not weak in cherishing the traditions of their glorious past. I pray the Congress leaders to put before the country such a programme of political advancement as does not demand the

sacrifice of the feelings of the Hindu or the Mohammedan, the Parsee or the Christian.

The preparation for self-government does not consist in merely insisting on it year after year in language that fires the imagination of the educated classes of the country into uncontrollable and fatal excesses, as is too painfully manifested in what is happening in Bengal. It does not consist in launching forth on the troubled waters of Indian politics the frail bark of *Swaraj* without care of its seaworthiness. Does *Swaraj* mean transfer of control, from the British to the peoples of India, of all internal affairs of the country, legislation, finance, administration of civil and criminal justice, police, state education, military service ? I suppose this is what is contemplated by Article I of the Allahabad Convention Committee. That Article sums up the object of the Indian National Congress to be "the attainment by the people of India of a system of government similar to that enjoyed by the Self-Governing Members of the British Empire." As a mere ideal without any reference to the conditions prevailing in India it is unexceptionable. Utopia is not unimaginable. But that it should furnish a basis in practical politics to divide off into moderates and extremists is incomprehensible. Have politicians of these two cults considered the futility of a schism that it engaged in laying down irreconcilable lines of policy for conditions that are not likely to be possible even in any measurably remote future ? Is it wise to weaken the solidarity of political unity ? Have we Indians put our own house in order ? Have the Hindu and Mohammedan sunk their many differences ? What has kept the Mohammedan as a people away from the Indian National Congress ? It was, I say, this very demand for the transfer of legislative and administrative control from the rulers to the ruled ; in other words, that the ruling authority should vest in the party that commands a majority of votes in the Council Chambers of the Indian Autonomy. It did not require much imagination to see that such a majority would be Hindu majority. What did the suggested change of masters signify ? Twenty-one years ago Sir Syed answered the question in his memorable Lucknow speech, and that answer has been for over two decades the rule of con-

duct for the Mohammedans of India in relation to the Congress. The All-India Muslim League has to answer that very question again. Should the Mohammedans of India accept the views of what was the Indian National Congress before the fateful and abortive Surat Sitting ? It seems to me that there are many questions of practical politics where the interests of the two communities are identical, and that in so far as these questions go, there is no earthly reason why the League should not hold out its hand in loving and patriotic grasp to the Congress.

The separation of the judicial from the executive, the repeal of degrading Colonial Ordinances, the extension of primary education, the adoption of measures of sanitation, the admission of Indians of all races in larger numbers into the higher branches of the public service, discontinuance of official interference in matters of local self-government, reasonable reduction of military expenditure without endangering efficiency, recognition of the legitimate and patriotic desire of the warlike races of India to render military service as volunteers, the grant of commissions in the army to Indians, equitable adjustment of Home Charges, limitation of revenue on land belonging to the State, establishment and development of village unions for the disposal of petty civil and criminal cases, encouragement and protection to indigenous arts and industries, the eradication of insolence, on one hand, and feeling of inferiority and mortification, on the other, between the rulers and the ruled, are some of the many grave questions of practical politics in India that equally affect all classes of our countrymen. I deny the accusation that the Mohammedans of India have not either the capacity to understand the value of co-operation for the accomplishment of reforms or the courage to face official disapprobation. Gentlemen, Mohammedan political foresight and Mohammedan courage do not require and advocacy. The world has seen enough of both to judge that they are wanting in neither. Why is it then that we have held aloof from the Indian National Congress ? Not because we do not want co-operation, not because we do not feel the urgency and wisdom of the reforms mentioned above and others of their kind, and not because we suffer from any nervous or mor-

bid fear of the rulers, but because the Indian National Congress does not only seek reforms such as are described above. It wants far more. To ask our rulers for specific measures of reform is to admit and recognize the necessity of their control, but to ask them to hand over that control is to ask them, however politely, to take to their ships and return from India. To ask for the latter is to ask for a change of government, and to press for the former would be, as put in Article I of the Allahabad Convention, "a steady reform of the existing system of administration". It is obvious that the existing system of administration is not "a system of government similar to that enjoyed by the Self-Governing Members of the 'British Empire". That article puts the latter as the object of the Congress and the reform of the former as the method of attainment.

It seems to me therefore that to attain the object, the method suggested would not be 'reform', however steady, of the 'existing system', but its extinction. The article does not seem to seek reform but revolution, though bloodless. Surely the Indian public has a right to have more light thrown on the meaning of that article. A shrewd suspicion may read between the lines and find the genesis of the inconsistency in the desire to pull together men of different shades of political views, loyalists, ultra-moderates, moderates and those verging on extremism. The desire is laudable, but the *modus operandi* questionable. It is possible to hide in dialectic obscurity the differences of basic principles for a time, but it will be blind folly to hope they will remain there. I wonder how those who have gone to Madras interpret "steady reform of the existing system of administration". If it really means extinction, the language of the Convention may serve to capture the unwary but not to captivate him. It resolves itself into the ideal put forward by the Indian National Congress year after year. The moderate wants autonomy or representative 'government under the aegis of the British Crown, and the extremist wants the same but without the fiction of the aegis. They both desire the extinction and not the reform of the present system of administration. Canada and Australia are tied to England by sentiments of race, character ond creed, and their continuance as such under

the aegis of the British Crown, as long as they are not treated with unpolitic interference, has an intelligent basis. The grant of autonomy to the Boers is of too recent a date to prognosticate that the aegis will be respected. In the case of America the aegis proved too brittle to survive the effects of the Boston Port Bill. In the light of the differences of social, moral and religious standards of England and India, and the diversity of race, character and creed between the ruler and the ruled, one may be pardoned for thinking that of the two ideals, however impracticable both, the one of the extremist, though steeped in treason, is not disingenuous. It definitely sets before the country the honest version that if self-government is attained by India, the British may not flatter themselves with the belief that they will have even the slender thread of the aegis to connect them with this country. The moderate hopes to hasten self-government by giving assurances of profound loyalty to the aegis, and with such assurances asks for autonomy. But gentlemen is this all that is needed for India ? The ideal of the one or of the other. Is the present need of India contemplation of ideals ? Has the good sense of the country run away with the notion that self-government is to be built in the land from the apex and not the base ?

I crave your indulgence to quote from a speech that I delivered when I had the honour to preside at the first session of the Bihar Provincial Conference. "To my mind the greater problem is how to equip ourselves for receiving and assimilating the amenities and advantages of self-government, than an insistence on the right to enjoy a privilege which, once we have reached the requisite efficiency, can no more be denied than the truth that water finds its own level I consider that in the development of national life in India there is far less danger from without than from within." Have the apostles of Indian autonomy given us, up to this time, any indication how their great deal will maintain internal peace, what will be its relation to the ruling chiefs, what will be the features of its military administration, how will it adjust the difference to standards of morality in its scheme of national education, how will it conduct itself in the devious and difficult paths of foreign policy, what guarantee will it give to capitalists of other countries who have

their millions vested in India, what protection will it accord to the domiciled European, how will it get over the dangers of intellectual disparity between races and sexes in India, and how will it reconcile religious, social and racial antipathies ? Are religion, society and politics watertight compartments ? Can you separate politics from the other two ? If a religious procession, the slaughter of a particular animal, the moral of Bankim's plot in *Anand Muth,* the preachings of fanatics in East Bengal or any other part of India, and numerous other subjects connected with religion, inflame the mind, it is insanity to dissociate Indian politics from them. Surely gentlemen, the mere elevation of an ideal is no title to its serious acceptance. True statesmenship is to work for the highest public good realizable. Before self-government, our ideal should be 'United India—united in a patriotism that leaves distant and visionary ideals to moulder in the vagueness and impracticability of their conception, and that addresses itself to working on non-controversial lines. How true are the words of the president of the unfortunate Surat Sitting of the Congress in his undelivered speech. He said : "hasty maxims drawn from the history of other nations and other times are extremely dangerous, as the conditions are never the same, and action which produces certain results in one country at one time may lead to a directly opposite result in another country and at another time." Has not this ideal of self-government, however elevated, caused impatience on account of its impracticability, and has not the impatience carried the idealist off his feet, and has not this loss of equipoise created extremism, and has not extremism given birth to anarchism, bombs, secret societies and assassination, and is not all this the greatest menace to the peaceful progress of the country ?

Gentlemen, does the contemplation of an almost impossible ideal compensate for all the repressive measures that have been passed in the last two years ? Resurrection of Regulation 3 of 1818, the Ordinance of May 1907, the Seditious Meetings Act, the Newspaper (Incitement to Offences) Act, and the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act are the bitter fruits of the mis-spent labour of the idealist in the last two decades. These

Acts may be a reproach to the Statute Book, but who is responsible for the reproach ? The responsibility lies with those who, infatuated with the seductions of an idealistic but impracticable autonomy, have caused widespread intellectual distemper among the educated Indians, a distemper utterly regardless of surroundings, of expediency and of the best interests of the country. The gospel of representative government in India has been preached with reckless carelessness, and the energy of the educated intellect of the country has been employed for the creation of longings the fulfilment of which within any measurable distance of time is impossible. The result is a sullen, disappointed, demoralized and morbid disposition in the best portion of the national asset of the country—the educated Indians.

Is this not sufficiently deplorable a state of affairs to serve as a warning to us, Musalmans ? Has not the League a right to beseech the Congress leaders not to prolong the agony any more, imperil the safety of the country any further and jeopardize peaceful progress by a profitless devotion to a chimera ? Let the Indian National Congress shake itself free from the baneful blandishments of "Self-Governing member of the British Empire" ; and let it announce that in our practical politics, loyalty to the British administration of the country is loyalty to India, and that the reform of the 'existing system' is possible only with the maintenance of British control. Gentlemen, I am not putting this supplication forward in any spirit of cavil, but solely with a view to bringing about an *entente cordiale* between the Indian National Congress and the great community that you represent—and also with a view that in the great work of the regeneration of India, the firm but guiding hand of our rulers may be in comradeship with our own. As long as the leaders of the Indian National Congress will not give us a workable policy like the one indicated above, so long the All-India Muslim League has a sacred duty to perform. That duty is to save the community it represents, and specially the youth of that community, from the political error of joining an organization that in the main, as put by Lord Morely, cries for the moon.

There is another matter not of principle but of procedure

that influences the question of the participation of the Musalmans in the deliberations of the Congress. The Allahabad Convention with the best of motives has adopted the conciliatory measure contained in its Article XXVI. That article lays down the procedure that in the Subject Committee or in the Congress no subject shall be introduced to which the Hindu or Mohammedan delegates may object as a body by a majority of three-fourths of their number. I have read much in papers, as also in a contribution to the *Hindustan Review* by Mr. Abbas Tyabji, of the soundness of the safeguard this Article provides for the protection of minorities. It is with the greatest deference to the framers of that Article and its admirers that I venture to point out that this safeguard does not count for much as long as the number of delegates to the Congress is not fixed, and as long as the minorities do not have their own denominational electoral colleges. For it is quite obvious that when an unlimited number of delegates are permitted to attend the Congress, the few simple souls of our community who may join the Congress with the genuine desire of serving Indian Musalmans in that body may find themselves swamped by their own co-religionists, no doubt, but mandatories of non-Muslim electorates. For the principle of the protection of minorities, it is necessary that a minority should feel and enjoy absolute security in its own solidarity, which is impossible without a denominational basis. I believe this was recognized in the scheme of the reform of Councils, and therefore a separate electorate for the Musalmans was considered necessary. Once the Congress Convention has recognized the wisdom of the unqualified protection of the minorities, I have no doubt it will see the necessity of carrying Article XXVI to its logical conclusion.

It seems to me therefore, gentlemen, that should the Indian National Congrsss in the two particulars mentioned above, the one of the policy underlying the abandonment of an unrealizable ideal and the other of the procedure affecting the protection of minorities, be pleased to reconsider its position, there is every hope that the aspiration of the All-India Muslim League—United India—may be realized in the near future. It is then alone that Mohammedans can work with Hindus on non-

controversial lines. I may take the liberty of mentioning that we have made a beginning in this direction in Bihar, and that the Bihar Provincial Conference held last April at Patna brought Hindus and Mohammedans together because it resolved to work on a non-controversial and practical basis. Gentlemen, should my feeble voice ever reach the ears of such stalwart leaders of the Indian National Congress as Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Mr. Gokhale and Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh, I pray them to believe in the earnestness of my appeal. The creed of the Al-India Muslim League is co-operation with the rulers, co-operation with our non-Muslim countrymen and solidarity amongst ourselves. This is our idea of United India.

Gentlemen, I fear I have already trespassed too long on your patience, but I cannot close my address without an appeal to all my Musalman brethern of India, of whatever persuasion they may be, that the one paramount duty they owe to their king, country and themselves is the maintenance of a strong and powerful solidarity within their own community. We must not forget that division amongst ourselves means sacrifice and surrender of our political position. Gentlemen, if you desire your voice to be heard in the land, you must strive for and maintain unity amongst yourselves. The Government and your non-Muslim countrymen have equal need of your services. It is your duty to support and uphold the Government in the measures it has adopted to stamp out lawlessness, sedition and anarchism. It is your duty equally to co-operate with your non-Muslim countrymen in praying Government to inaugurate a policy of steady reform and courageous conciliation consistent with the dignity of British control. Gentlemen, the country is passing through the throes of a political convulsion. Of all times, this is the one when, in serving the best interests of the country, you should stand together and make your presence felt in the proper and happy adjustment of the relations between the rulers and the ruled. Can you do so without unity amongst yourselves ? Without an absolute political solidarity your position is full of peril, and I implore you to unite to exist.

Gentlemen, the last Despatch of Lord Morley to His Excel-

lency the Viceroy on the scheme of the Reform of Councils, seems to overlook the principle that representation to minorities must have its origin in a denominational basis from the very start to finish, from the first voting unit to the elected representative. Without this the Musalmans cannot hope to secure the true protection which their interests demand. Hasty expression to my views on this Despatch, received last week, I hesitate to give; but the principle involved is of vital consequences to our community, and a united expression of our views alone can save us from the perils of imperfection contained in the Despatch. Gentlemen, I again call upon you to unite. It is a solemn and sacred duty you owe to yourself and to your posterity.

3

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS AND POLITICAL EDUCATION

I*

Your Highness and Gentlemen, I thank you for the great honour that you have conferred on me by selecting me to be your President at this Session of the All-India Muslim League. Believe me that though I yield to none in my earnest desire to help forward the cause of the community to which you and I belong, it was with great hesitation that I accepted the high responsibility to which I have been called. My diffidence is due to the consciousness that I am but an apprentice in the field of national service compared to the past masters before whom I am privileged to stand. This feeling is still heightened, when I remember that this place was to have been occupied by so trusted and eminent a leader of our community as the Right Honourable Syed Ameer Ali. Though we are denied the privilege of meeting him face to face by the gracious call which has been made upon his services by our august Sovereign—an event, let me say in passing, at which we all rejoice as making an important extension in the privileges of the Indian subjects of His Majesty—, it is a source of satisfaction to us that we are not left altogether without his valuable guidance. He has sent a message to the League, which you will presently have the pleasure to listen to, and I have no doubt that you will appreciate the words of wisdom and counsel which that patriot has felt it necessary to send, in his solicitude for the welfare of the community to whose interests he has devoted his life-long energies and resources. Inspired by the spirit of this message and stimulated by the magnetic personality of our respected President, H.H. the Aga Khan, you will, I trust, extend to me that friendly co-operation and kindly indulgence which is so essen-

*Presidential address delivered by Sir Ghulam Ali Khan Bahadur at the Delhi session held on 29-30 January, 1910.

tial to the proper discharge of the duties of my office.

Many events of importance have occurred since we met last at Amritsar—events both of a pleasurable as well as painful nature. But by far the greatest of these is the introduction in this country of the great Scheme of Reforms initiated by Lords Minto and Morley, and the awakening in the community which it has been instrumental in causing. The varying vicissitudes through which this Scheme passed at various times, though often of a nature to damp our ardour and spirits, fortunately served as a powerful incentive to further efforts, and resulted in an unprecedented outburst of political activity which has wiped out the stigma of utter inertness so long attaching to our name. Hundreds of meetings were held all over the country under the auspicies of the numerous leagues and associations, and respectful representations were made to Government, praying for the protection of Musalman interests in the spirit of the famous pledge of H.E. Lord Minto to the All-India Muslim Deputation in October 1906. A generous minister and a fair-minded administration have recognized the justice of our demands, and we are met here to-day, full of heartfelt gratitude, to consider how best we might show ourselves worthy of the high trust that has been reposed in us. It is true that the Indian Musalmans have not got all they prayed for and that was legitimately their due. In the scheme of representation adopted for the Imperial Council, our brethren in the North-Western Frontier Province, Baluchistan and the Central Provinces have not been conceded the privilege of sending up their representatives, nor have our brethren in the Punjab been invested with the right of electing their representatives on the Imperial Council, nor has separate representation been conceded to them on the Provincial Council. Our Burman co-religionists remain utterly unrepresented on the expanded Councils. Nevertheless, we accept the Reforms in the spirit of loyalty and gratitude which has ever characterized our communal policy towards the benign Government. The enlightened leadership of H.H. the Agha Khan, and the Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali, has not only secured for us our rights at the hands of the Government, but has brought about a wonderful solidarity and uniformity of

ideas in the community. And it is our fervent hope that with their continued advice and help, we shall in time be able to prove ourselves worthy of the great responsibilities that have been thrown upon us by the Reforms just introduced, and to falsify the misgivings that some of our countrymen have entertained without any justification as regards our attitude towards our sister communities.

Permit me, gentlemen, at this juncture to observe that to me it seems unreasonable to condemn the Reforms wholesale, as is being done in certain quarters. To all right-minded persons these Reforms are really the outcome of the generous instinct of far-sighted British statesmen, whose only desire is to satisfy, in as liberal a manner as is consistent with the safety of the Empire and its many-sided interests, the growing aspirations of the Indian peoples, even at a time when the inhuman and anarchical acts perpetrated by a mischievous and detested section of our countrymen might well have justified a different policy. I cannot understand with what logic, or reason, the separate electorates, introduced with a commendable desire to protect the special interests of important minorities, are characterized as designed to serve like iron walls for dividing one community from another. To me it appears that separate representation is the only provision calculated to prevent undesirable conflict between two unequally balanced communities, as is inevitable in a contest where candidates of different races and creeds compete for the same honour. The recent elections to the different Legislative Councils in the country furnish an excellent object-lesson in this respect. Though Musalmans have been returned by certain mixed electorates, it is, in spite of whatever our Hindu brethren might choose to say to the contrary, clear from an impartial survey of facts that their success was due only to sheer chance, the Hindus generally voting only for the candidates of their own persuasion. And it is noteworthy that the return of these Musalmans, though entirely due to exceptional circumstances which from their very nature cannot be expected to recur, has been made use of by a class of Hindu publicists as a ground for condemning the right of separate representation granted to our community. This attitude of ou· friends is cer-

tainly not calculated to promote that harmony and co-operation between the two communities which they profess to bring about. The attitude of the Parsis and the native Christians in asking for separate electorates show an appreciation of the benefits likely to result from communal representation. And it is my firm conviction that if ever Indian solidarity is to be attained, it will be not so much by the narrow-minded policy, which certain of our countrymen are following, of insisting on a uniformity of views in all respects, and of belittling the importance of opinions and sentiments which are different from their own, but by a liberal-minded recognition of the differences that exist amongst ourselves, and a general desire to give each one his due, so as to secure mutual goodwill and consideration for the sake of our common motherland. This has the more to be kept in mind, especially as the Reforms which have now been conceded, from but an earnest of the greater measures which are yet to follow. The institutions of local self-government are shortly to be remodelled and as the Musalman have always held that if the Reforms are to be really effective, the principle of separate representation should be carried deep down to the lowermost rungs of the ladder; and it will be our duty to press for the formation of separate electorates in all municipal, *taluqa* and district boards.

Much has been said and still more may be said of the importance of the Reforms; but in my view, their greatest value consists in the political education which they are calculated to impart to the people at large. Already, the awakening which our leaders had brought about in the community with so much difficulty has been remarkably enhanced. Even people usually given to supreme apathy and indifference have been aroused to a sense of the necessity of bestirring themselves. Not the least evidence of this transformation in the community is found in the Southern Presidency where a Provincial League has been successfully formed and separate representation introduced under satisfactory conditions. It has been my privilege to be connected with this movement and watch its progress from its very commencement; and it is my firm conviction that the policy which we have hitherto pursued, the policy of loyalty to

Government, of the protection of our interests and friendliness to our neighbours, is a sound and safe one and—not withstanding all the difficulties which His Highness the Aga Khan alluded to in one of his recent utterances—will lead to our ultimate success.

I do not think it necessary for me to discusss in any detail either our policy or the subject that will engage your attention during the next three days. This has been dealt with by our President in his eloquent opening address, and the gentlemen who will address you after me will, no doubt, have a great deal to say in this connection. Let me, however, refer in brief to some of the chief means by which I think we may achieve the national regeneration which we all have in view.

Need to Develop Muslim Press

Foremost amongst these, is the question of the Muslim Press, which I observe with pain and regret, is not sufficiently strong. In these days when the press may be truly said to rule the world, it is impossible to take the fullest and the best advantage of the awakening in our community, without having powerful organs of public opinion. I appeal to the well-to-do leaders o' the community to look upon the establishment of newspapers, especially of a strong English daily in every province, as a philanthropic concern and raise, by subscriptions amongst themselves, a sufficiently large fund to start and maintain them in a prosperous and efficient condition.

A Muslim University

Another powerful means of influencing the community to push on the propaganda we have set before ourselves has to do with the education of our younger generation. The question of raising the Aligarh College to the status of a university is as intimately connected with the fortunes of the political movement in the community as with its educational or social advancement. It is recognized on all hands that the safe and sound policy along which the Indian Musalmans are moving at the present time is due, in no small measure, to the healthy tone which the

M.A.O. College imparts to its Alumni and, through them, to the community at large: and I feel sure that when, as a university, it becomes a central seat of learning and the chief fountainhead of thought for the Musalman world, this process of expansion will be quickened, and its healthy tone will communicate itself to the future leaders of the community and exercise a salutary influence on all the followers of Islam. In this view it is necessary that the question of a Muslim University should be taken up and handled on this platform as on the platform of the All-India Mohammedan Educational Conference.

Urdu as a Common Vernacular

A third way of bringing about the desired regeneration of the community is the extension of Urdu as the common vernacular of all the Musalmans in the country. Community of language is universally admitted to be a powerful factor in securing the unity of a people, and Urdu, which is already spoken by considerable numbers and which is generally understood in all parts of this vast continent, is pre-eminently fitted to serve this purpose.

Moreover, Urdu has preserved all the good features of an Oriental language and has not been contaminated by the disturbing influences which, though foreign to our soil, have unfortunately begun to make inroads into the other vernaculars. The loyal and respectful tone towards the Government which the Urdu press has maintained in the hands of the Musalmans, even during the most stirring period in recent times, illustrates clearly what I mean. Assuredly, a language which possesses, such inherent capacity and virtues deserves the solid support of the community. It is encouraging to remember that, day by day, the sphere of the influence of Urdu it extending. Even in such a distant part of the Empire as Madras, people whose mother tongue is Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam or Canarese, are increasingly adopting Urdu for all practical purposes and are founding schools in which Urdu forms the medium of instruction. I trust that all lovers of the country and all lovers of peace and progress will try their best to strengthen this tendency and strenu-

uously strive to make Urdu the common language of all India.

Gentlemen, these are trite commonplaces, no doubt but I have so long occupied you with them for the simple reason that, more often than not, we are in danger of forgetting even such commonplaces merely on account of their familiarity.

The renewed agitation of the Bengalis for the repeal of the Partition of Bengal has created some uneasiness in the minds of our co-religionists, especially in Eastern Bengal ; but I am convinced that there is not the least ground for any such misgivings, inasmuch as the highest authorities have declared it to be a settled fact, and any tampering with that decision will be as dangerous to the prestige of the British rule in this country as it will, undoubtedly, be injurious to the vital interests of our community.

Before I sit down, let me remind you of a duty which we owe to ourselves and to our benign Government. It is admitted on all hands that peace and tranquillity are sacred blessings, which have been secured to us by the British Raj, and without them no progress of any kind is possible. To the misfortune of our country, a nefarious brood of pseudo-patriots has sprung up in the land, with the unholy object of defying British authority and causing a state of confusion and anarchy. Only recently, the diabolical murder of a popular Collector at Nasik in the South, the attempt on the life of the Deputy Commissioner of Ambala in the North, and the dastardly shooting of a Mohammedan Inspector of the Criminal Investigation Department in the East, have sent a thrill of horror throughout the country. These revolting outrages have brought home with greater force the imperative necessity, on the part of all law-abiding citizens of this Empire, of devising concerted action to uproot the poisonous growth which has appeared amongst us. I appeal to you all, as the real lovers of the awakening and the advancement I have spoken of, to range yourselves on the side of the administration that has facilitated the regeneration of our community and to help to destroy the monster which threatens the peace of our country.

In conclusion, my earnest prayer is that it may be given to us to walk in the footsteps of our great forefathers, to remain

true to our time-honoured traditions of active loyalty to the Government that affords us protection, and of goodwill towards the neighbours with whom our lot is cast, and withal render faithful service to Islam to which we are all so proudto belong.

II*

Your Highness, Rajas, Nawabs and Gentlemen, in 1908 you did me the honour of inviting me to preside at the Session of the League at Amritsar, but as ill-luck would have it I was unable to do so. With unusual indulgence you repeated your invitation, and on the persuasion of our President, my esteemed and valued friend, His Highness the Aga Khan, I accepted the position; and in fact at his instance, and to suit His Highness' and my convenience, you fixed the Session of the League late in January, for which I am most recognizant to you. But circumstances have again arisen to prevent my personal attendance. Next year, perhaps, if you are still disposed to hear my words, I may be more fortunate. Meanwhile, acting on our President H.H. the Aga Khan's suggestion, I send you herewith my written greetings.

Since your last Session important constitutional changes have been inaugurated in the country, the full results of which can hardly be realized yet. Others are on the *tapis*, which, when formulated, will no doubt be carefully considered by you all in all their bearings.

Throughout the controversy to which the Reform proposals gave rise, the Musalman attitude, I am glad to say, was singularly sober and moderate, not actuated by any ill-will or antagonism towards any other community. The Musalmans were animated with the single desire of safeguarding their rights and interests in such form as would give them an assured position in the political institutions of the country. Neither their claims

*Syed Ameer Ali was invited to preside over the Amritsar session of the League held in 1908. But he expressed his inability. He was again invited to preside over the Delhi session of the Lea ue held in 1910. Since he could not honour this invitation in spite of his willingness to do so, he sent his written address for the occasion that was read out by Mian Muhammed Shafi at the request of H.H. the Agha Khan

nor their actions in urging them implied any encroachment on, or, disregard of the rights of any other body. The Musalman people owe a debt of gratitude to the League and its branches and to the cognate organizations for having, in the first place, grasped the situation that had suddenly risen in India, and in the second place, for having consistently followed the policy necessary in dealing with it. To understand the difficulty with which they were confronted, you have only to realize the disintegrated condition of Musalman society—due to causes partly of our own creation, the utter inability, in most cases, to understand the real method of work or the nature of the remedies needed under the circumstances. To these must be added the lack of of political training, so essential in progressive communities to take full advantage of the extension of constitutional privileges. Until very recently, the preaching of those amongst you who had to some extent studied the signs and portent of the times and knew with some certainty what was coming, had been literally a cry in the wilderness. Whilst other communities had combined with purely literary education considerable political training, our people had sedulously refused to occupy themselves with the question of communal organization or the consideration of communal interests prosecuted with wisdom and advocated in unselfishness. We had remained content with purely academic training. Individualism, the curse of Musalman communities was encouraged; little or no attempt was made to show the unity of intere ts between the various classes comprising Musalman society. No considered effort was directed to stay its further disintegration, nay, decomposition; and when we awoke but the other day and realized what was impending, we naturally found the field occupied by more alert rivals. If I am laying bare the mistakes of the past, it is only with the object of drawing your attention, as earnest Muslims and true patriots, sincerely bent on the improvement of our people, as I believe you are, to the work which lies before us in the future.

In the great controversy which has just closed regarding the share of the Mohammedans in the new constitutional privileges the Crown has extended to the peoples of India, I have not been

able to understand the rigidity displayed by so many high-placed officials towards the Musalman claims.

The subject, however, may be regarded for the present as *res judicata*, and I sincerely trust that the two great communities whom the Reforms mainly affect will decide to work together in harmony and concord for the good of their common country. They have both to live together, to progress together, and in evil days to suffer together. The Musalmans have established their right to be in the land by a longer domicile than the Normans in England; many of them have the same blood in their veins as their Hindu fellow-countrymen. There is no reason whatever why, in spite of difference of religion, customs, habits of life and ideas, they should not co-operate in the great task which lies before them both, of promoting the welfare of India under the aegis of the British Crown. National development, even the fulfilment of the dream of self-government, depends on the co-operation of both races in a spirit of amity and concord. I have used the word 'dream' in connection with self-government, not from any thought of disparagement, but because I feel that for many years to come British rule in India is a vital necessity. I firmly believe that if Great Britain were to lose her hold over this country before the diverse races, creeds and nationalities have thoroughly learnt the value of a spirit of compromise and toleration in the management of public affairs—before they have clearly understood the responsibilities of citizenship, it will mean a relapse into the anarchy of 150 years ago, a fierce religious and racial struggle, and a collapse of the fabric so labouriously built up within the last half century. The idea that any one particular race can hold down the others without outside help must be dismissed as an idle dream. Musalman supremacy was laid to dust when Aurangzeb went to his grave; Hindu supremacy received its death-blow when the Musalman confederation shattered the Mahratta host on the banks of the Jamna; Panipat paved the way for the rise of British power in India. It was indeed a wise decree of Providence that enabled the British to take over the helm from the last *de jure* sovereign of India. And it would be rank ingrati-

tude if Hindus and Mohammedans alike were not to recognize the greatness of the work achieved by England with the legacy left to her by India's previous rulers.

To the Musalmans of India the permanence of British rule is a matter of the utmost importance; their sympathies and their interests extend far beyond the limits of the Indian continent, and the peaceful maintenance and development of all they value depends on England retaining her predominant place in the councils of the civilized world. It is therefore essential for us to associate ourselves whole-heartedly with the maintenance of law and order, to co-operate in all loyalty of spirit with the servants of the Crown to promote the country's welfare, and to put aside any wild and visionary dreams about India's sudden emergence to independence. At the present stage of the country's development, it behoves us all to impress on our rising generation the duties of loyal citizenship and the necessity of realizing India's needs in a sober spirit.

As the same time, I do not wish to recommend that you should cease to urge your claims to your share in the benefits of British rule, or to raise your voice against the unfair treatment of your fellow-countrymen in any part of the Empire, or forego your right to question arbitrary acts of executive authority. You would fail in your duty both to yourselves and to your Sovereign if you did not object with all the strength in your command, but constitutionally, to any measure which you were convinced was to the detriment of your people or your country.

Gentlemen, so long as you work in this spirit, no man will have the right to complain of the loyalty and sincerity of your motives or the justice of your action. Rancour and spite you cannot control; but honest public opinion in England and India will never question the correctness of your attitude or the validity of your conduct.

With the very large extension of representative institutions, a new era has opened in India. How the privileges the Crown has granted to peoples of the country will be used, whether to its good or to its detriment, whether they will lead to concord

and harmony or to discord and strife remains to be seen. One thing is certain, that unless the Hindu ahd Mohammedans accept the new machinery of administration in the spirit in which it has been granted and use it as a means for the economic as well as the political development of India, 'The Reform' will not prove a blessing.

Economic Development

For our own people the question of economic development over-shadows all others. It has an importance for every class; the rich magnate, the wealthy landholder cannot dissociate himself from his humble brother of the lower ranks of the middle class without serious injury to the whole body himselt included. To no community is the old saying of the Persian poet more applicable than to the Musalman :

"Human beings are the limbs of one body."

The interests of each class are bound up with those of the other; and therefore the material well-being and economic progress of the whole community is a matter of moment and concern to every Musalman.

Within the last 40 years, education, and especially English education, has made enormous strides among the Musalman people. Yet the material and economic condition of the general body of Mohammedan has not improved in proportion. In parts of the country there are distinct signs of retrogression. We have first to understand the causes of this deplorable feature in our national life, before attempting to seek remedies. The fact is that for many years past a steady process of disintegration and demoralization, partly induced by circumstances and forces beyond our control, has been going on in our midst : our men of wealth have not chosen to descend from their pedestals, until quite recently, to take part in the national life; since we awoke to the value of modern Western culture, our education has remained one-sided; we did not realize until yesterday—and I doubt it is thoroughly realized even now—the importance of political training.

Although thrift is part of the religion of Islam, we in India allow it little scope in practice. And what is the consequence : steady impoverishment of the community. State service and the profession of law monopolize the energies of a large number of the intelligent sections of the community. Many profitable fields of industry, commerce and trade lie uncultivated ; while technical education and the study of practical science do not attract the attention they deserve. Nor has any method of co-operation been thought of with the object of checking the impoverishment of Musalman families.

These are questions which no Musalman who loves his people or his religion can think of without the deepest concern. Each defect singly would tend to undermine the prosperity of the best organized community; combined they are fatal where cohesiveness is wanting among the different sections.

As a consequence of the administrative conditions recently introduced in India, I fear political pursuits will, in the future, largely engross the activities of the Indian peoples. Much of the energy that might be devoted with advantage to the development of the country, in directions which lead to her intellectual and material progress, will be diverted to the generally barren fields of politics.

'System of Moderation' in Politics

I should like to warn my co-religionists against neglecting, in favour of political pursuits, those departments of industry or study which conduce to national prosperity. Far be it from me to say one word to discourage or dissuade you from keeping consistently before you your political rights and privileges, from insisting on their recognition and educating your people to understand their meaning and to realize that rights imply duties. What I do desire to impress on you is that it would be fatal for you ever to allow all your energies to be absorbed in politics, as you allowed them to be absorbed in purely academic education. I consider it a mischievous sign of political activity that when four seats are allotted to Musalmans on a provincial council, 14 notables of more or less equal

worth should emerge from their solitudes to engage in a hot contest for election. As they cannot possibly occupy separate political platforms, as their policy on public question must be identical, the contest must be necessity take a turn of personal rivalry, the effect of which cannot of very healthy on the community. I appeal to the good sense of my people to abandon that characteristic which so stubbornly stood in the path of their progress. I would suggest to the Central League and all the Musalman organization throughout the country to join in establishing what may be called a 'system of moderation' for the election of Musalman members on councils, district boards, municipalties and local boards. An influential advisory committee in all important centres might be of considerable assisance in bringing about compromise in the public interests, between rival candidates. Such a course would add strength to the Musalman cause, would be patriotic, and in accord with the dictates of religion. Difficulties may suggest themselves to prevent our deriving full benefit from such committees. But I am confident their establishment would to a great extent ease the present tension in the Musalman community. The 'system of moderation' I venture to suggest will not interfere with the legitimate ambitions of any politician; but endeavouring to remove frictions and personal rivalries, assure to each candidate a successful issue and to the community some degree of credit—for the present condition in some parts of the country is little short of scandalous.

Solidarity and Development

Some effort should also be directed towards infusing a greater spirit of solidarity into Mohammedan society and removing the evil effects of the process of disintegration that has been going on amongst us for the last hundred years, and which has aggravated the feeling of egoistic individualism. I regard this failing as a deplorable evil among our people, which weakens our communal strength and deprives us of the advantages resulting from sustained loyalty to and co-operation with each other. A little while ago *The Times* in an article dealing with the centrifugal tendencies of the Spanish character remarked that if seven Spaniards were to form a political association,

it would soon split into three with one independent. Unfortunately that criticism applies with equal appositeness to the Mohammedans in many parts of India. I would strongly urge on Musalmans of light and leading, in general, and the Musalman organizations, in particular, some system of regular social reunions at each centre, where Muslims would meet on friendly terms and discuss subjects of communal interest in a broad spi-it, with an honest desire to sink personal differences and to subordinate personal ambitions to the well-being of the community. We must recognize that it serves no useful purpose to fritter away our strength in petty dispute or in forming party combinations against each other.

There should be clubs, such as exist in England, and have come recentlv into being in Turkey, in connection with the provincialand district Leagues for lectures on subjects of political, economic or scientific interest, for discussions and reading of works on history, political economy and other cognate subjects, so as to engender a genuine and enlightened public spirit among our people.

We ought to be content no longer with merely passing resolutions. If the central and the provincial Leagues were to adopt the suggestion I am making and introduce it into their working programme, I would further suggest that leading and influential members should visit local centres and assist in the organization of these clubs. Periodical inspections would be necessary on their part to encourage and sustain the interest of local members which has always a tendency to flag, to smooth frictions which have a peculiar habit of springing up—and generally to induce a spirit of *comaraderie* and good-fellowship. The same system, I would humbly urge, should be adopted in the provincial centres with the necessary adaptation. One great idea should dominate all the steps we take to create a real, abiding, intelligent interest among our people, high and low, in the national welfare. For in this connection, we must not overlook our common failing, that when we have no great immediate purpose in vlew, our energies slacken, and, to use a colloquialism, we let our work slide. This should not be allowed under any circumstance. It should be our constant

endeavour to keep our co-religionists alive to the crying need of progress and national development under the aegis of the great Power which holds in its hands the destinies of India.

As I have already briefly indicated, there are many questions affecting the well-being of our people which will require your attention. I think you will agree with me that their economic and material condition is of the utmost importance, and you will have to consider, among other problems, how best to prevent the impoverishment of Musalmans and the passing of Musalman estates into other hands, how to foster industries among them to encourage trade and commerce, a better and more practical use of academic learning, am merely indicating the directions to which, in our newly awakened desire to improve the general condition of our people, we will have to devote our energies.

Settlement of Family Disputes and Thrift

The impoverishment of Musalman families is a subject of stupendous magnitude. All progress, communal and individual, depends on stabillty of fortune. Superficially regarded, the Islamic system may seem socialistic ; but while the great Founder of our Faith, in his endeavour to remedy the great injustice that prevailed in all the countries of the world when he made his appearance, ordained a division of property among the heirs of a deceased owner, he, at the same time, with his wonderful and divinely inspired genuis, laid down a rule which provides a remedy against the consequences of infinite subdivisions among a succession of heirs. This is the institution designated in the Islamic system as *Wakf-ala'l-Aulad*. An endeavour should he made to place it on a satisfactory basis. The easiest solution would be to obtain from the Legislature a validating act that would give statutory recognition, with adequate safeguards against fraud, to a principle of supreme importance to the Musalman people.

But this alone, in my judgement, will not be sufficient to check the impoverishment and ultimate effacement of Musalman families. Musalmans must in the first place be taught thrift. Let us bear in mind what our Holy Book says :

"But let not thy hand be tied up to thy neck, nor yet open it with all openness lest thou sit down in rebuke in beggary."

Secondly, they must learn the value of co-operation and self-help, and thirdly, they must seek from the Legislature the re-establishment of courts of arbitration for the settlement of family disputes. Family litigation is the curse of Indian society. The moment a well-to-do Indian dies, be he Hindu or be he Mohammedan, his inheritance finds its way into the melting-pot; dishonest employees encourage domestic disputes with a view to reaping a rich harvest for themselves. The money-lender, sitting at the gate of every fairly prosperous family, is ready to finance the disputants, conscious of the fact that whether they lose or win, his is the ultimate gain. It is notorious that the cost of litigation has increased enormously within recent years. In England there are two grades in the profession, in India there are at least three; and they all receive their quota of the death-duties, which the *mahajans* help in extracting from the estate of the deceased. No country, however prosperous, certainly no community circumstanced as the Mohammedan, can make headway against the insidious and persistent system of destruction. Within my own experience, four families have risen and disappeared successively in one district. A Musalman family was displaced by an enterprising syndicate consisting of two *mawari* bankers, who in their turn were destroyed by another *mawari mahajan,* and this man, I now understand, is making room for another member of his class.

The disastrous consequences to the prosperity and progress of the country from this eternal whirl of life and death, can hardly be overrated. We hear a great deal of the impoverishment, ruin and havoc caused among families who form so many centres of the country's prosperity, by the complex legal and economic conditions which have come into existence under British rule. Stable conditions are as necessary to the progress of the people as a stable propertied class is to the safety of the State, but the Government preoccupied in its work of political reforms has little time, still less the inclination, to grapple with the problem. Unwelcome suggestions from quarters not viewed

with favour have either been received with impatience or pigeon-holed with official courtesy. As the questions I have indicted are of the utmost important to the Musalman community, I venture to suggest that you should move the Government to re-establish the arbitration courts which existed in the early part of the nineteenth century for the settlement of family disputes, and to induce the ordinary courts of justice to discourage family litigation. This, I submit, will not conduce to the benefit of one community only, but to that of all, and ought to receive the support of every friend of the Indian people, irrespective of creed and race, I know that the Government derives a large income from court fees, which some people regard as a taxation on justice, and that you may probably by your proposal rouse the opposition of large and powerful interests. But do not allow yourselves to be discouraged by the failure of your first attempt; go on hammering at the gate until you have gained admittance.

As a corollary to the above, proposition, I strongly urge the formation of co-operative associations for mutual help, whose first duty should be to save Mohammedan families, so far as possible, from disruption, and in the last resort to 'buy in', so to speak, Musalman estates. I believe it is perfectly feasible and practicable to devise a system of co-operative work of this kind on strict business lines; and I would commend its consideration to the Economic Section of the League, to which I shall presently refer.

Work, Education and Training

My remarks so far relate to the sections of our community who are fortunate in the immediate possession of means and property and to whom the conservation of such means is important. But there is a large body to whom its acquisition forms the spur to activity; they seek your assistance for finding outlets for their energies or for showing them the way for the employment of their talents and industry. The legal profession is overcrowded and many have taken to it who have little aptitude for its initial drudgery and constant assiduity. State service affords but a narrow field of occupation, and it is already held largely by representatives of other communities whom it would,

in any circumstances, be difficult to dislodge. Why should you not look out for other avenues to means at prosperity? Your forefathers never condemned trade, commerce, or any form of industry. Kings applied themselves to learn handicrafts. Viziers were merchants. The greatest scholars, scientists and poets had some vocation. The Prophet himself constantly preached the dignity of labour.

The training of your youths, especially in upper India, in Bengal and in the Punjab, has been mostly academic, either with a view to State service or to the pursuit of law. Your educational institutions, I trust, will now realize the necessity of giving an important place in the curriculum of their studies to technical education. The Karachi Islamia College, in the establishment of which I had some little part, has already set the example. Many fields of industry are lying mostly untouched by our people : to yield a return they all require training and technical knowledge which your educational institutions could easily impart; and many need a certain amount of capital. Here again, the co-operative associations, proceeding not on charitable, but on strictly business lines, can come to the assistance of enterprising youths really in earnest to fight the battle of life.

Many of our young Hindu fellow-countrymen come to England to study poultry-farming, agriculture, sericulture, horticulture, fruit-culture; to acquaint themselves with the secrets of leather and other industries; they go to Japan and the United States to learn practical engineering, chemistry and other departments of art and the applied sciences. The awakening among them to the demands of material progress is as admirable as their awakening to political conceptions is extraordinary.

I cannot help viewing with regret, not unmixed with shame, the apathy generally displayed in these directions by Musalman youths. Want of means is often urged as the chief reason that prevents them from engaging in these studies. But surely our rich men whose charitable instincts and interest in the welfare of their people are often roused by the visits of their districts of Lieutenant Governors and other high officials, might devote, *fi-sabil illah*, a small part of their superfluity to found scholar-

ships for promising Mohammedan youths to study, either in India or Europe, the subjects I have indicated, which later in life would be beneficial to them as well as to their country.

In the halcyon days of Islam, our men of wealth founded colleges and endowed scholarships to win the reward of God; in our times they do so to gain the approval of the Government official. Might we not with advantage go back to the old ideal ?

But even without the charitable feeling coming into play to any very large extent, it is possible to devise a system for assisting deserving students by which they would become not only virtually self-supporting, but the means of helping others following in their footsteps. The consideration of this also, as an eminently practical method of solving a difficult problem, I would commend to the Economic Section.

Economic Council

To carry out the programme I have briefly outlined, I suggest you should divide the Committee—I trust you will soon after its designation and call it a Council—into sections, each charged with special duties and special functions. This will facilitate the accomplishment of the great work you have taken in hand—the political, material and moral regeneration of our people. Otherwise, the task is so stupendous that it will tax the collective energies of the entire League, and even then end in failure.

The divisions or sections that I would suggest would be the following :

(1) Economic (2) Political
(3) Educational (4) Sociological

(1) The Economic Section would be the most important, as certainly it should prove the most beneficent, if properly organized and carefully and consistently worked. I have already indi cated its duties.

(2) The Political Section's activities are easy to define and can be usefully employed to the advantages of our people if it is conducted on the broad lines already laid down.

(3) The Educational Section should co-operate with the Economic Section in carrying into effect the improvements in Musalman education in directions which have hitherto been either neglected or considered of minor importance. It can hardly trench on the functions of the Educational Conference, which fulfils a special function, and does not concern itself with economic questions.

(4) The functions of the Sociological Section would possess as much importance as those of the Economic Section. It would concern itself with all questions of social and domestic legislation which affect the well-being of the people, especially the Musalman, and social problems of moment and interest to our people. Many such subjects have arisen in Musalman society within recent years; but in the absence of a communal organization to deal with them more or less effectively, they have been, for the time being, put aside to the detriment of the community.

The preservation of Mohammedan institutions would naturally pertain to this Section.

In this connection, I would observe that so far as I can judge there can be no possible objection to persons holding offices under Government from serving on any of these Sections, save perhaps the Political, which after all is only political in name, as the great objects of our organization is to co-operate with the administration, not merely in the maintenance of law and order, but also in the promotion of the general interests of the country. But whatever technical difficulty may be felt in paid officials of Government serving on the Political Section, there cannot, it seems to me, be any objection to their associating themselves with the other Sections, the main object of which is economic progress and development.

Working, thus by sections or compartments, it would be

possible to obtain far more satisfactory results and certainly a larger measure of success than would be the case of the carrying out of the programme were entrusted to the General Committee. In my experience, practical work is more effectively and expeditiously accomplished by small bodies of competent and earnest people; it is only when they have arrived at some definite conclusion that it should be submitted for the confirmation of the General Committee. I recommend the adoption of this system not only to the Central League, but also to the provincial branches and cognate organizations. After all, the actual application of the measures we decide to adopt for benefiting our people will rest with the provincial Leagues, and the amount of success we attain will depend on their energy and loyalty of purpose. They are, or at least should be, in touch with the people whom the work we undertake concerns; they are acquainted with their real needs and requirements, with the local conditions and circumstances. Where information is wanting, it would be their duty to obtain it. The provincial Leagues will, therefore, be the genuine and truly effective machinery for putting our programme into operation, and we must rely on them for consistent and continuous efforts in the directions indicated. In fact, without their help it would hardly be possible to do much for the progress of the Musalman community. So far they have given whole-hearted support to the Central League; and I trust the solidarity that has existed so long will always be maintained. It is essential, however, that there should be absolute loyalty on all sides and the subordination of individual interests to the commonweal. It is only thus that we can hope to regain for our people the position in the internal economy of India to which they are legitimately entitled by their numbers and the virility of their character.

Gentlemen, I fear I have trespassed too long on your indulgence. But the subject is of such incalculable importance that I have felt it my duty to lay my suggestions before you at some length.

May I venture to make one more remark ? Pray do not think any task too great or any work too unworthy for your energies or activities.

Please remember the words of one of our own sages :

"Keep your aims high, so that before God and his creatures
May your work be estimated according to your aims."

In conclusion, I invoke the Almighty's blessings on you and your endeavours.

passed away after a brief illness. His death was so sudden that it produced something like consternation throughout the Empire, especially in view of the unsatisfactory state of European politics, the ambitious designs of Germany, and the long-threatened constitutional struggle between the House of Lords and the House of Commons which had just come to a head. It evoked an outburst of genuine sorrow throughout the civilized world, in which, owing to his conspicuously beneficent personality, he had come to be regarded as a sort of international institution. By his unique tact, foresight, judgement, skill in managing men, and considerate regard for the interests of others, he had won notable though unofficial, triumphs on the stricken fields of European diplomacy, where he was an easy first. His pacific tendencies and the freindly agreements and conventions which he inspired and helped to promote with various Powers contributed in no small degree to the maintenance of peace throughout the world. As the son of our beloved Queen Empress Victoria, his dear memory will always be cherished in India—as the gracious Sovereign during whose all-too-brief reign a beneficent scheme of constitutional reforms was initiaed and promulgated.

We are very happy to think that the generous policy towards India first initiated by Her late Majesty Queen Victoria, publicly announced to the Princes and People of India by her famous Proclamation of November 1858 and confirmed and acted on by her son, King Emperor Edward VII, is to be cotinued by her grandson, our Sovereign, King George V. We all have a vivid recollection of His Majesty's famous speech at the Guildhall after his return from India five years ago, in which he expressed the opinion that a little more sympathy should be infused into the administration of this country by England—thus putting his finger, with the unerring instinct of a born statesman, on the weak spot of British Indian administration. Within the last few weeks, we have heard with feelings of the liveliest delight, that His Imperial Majesty hopes to be able to come out to India with his Consort in about a year's time, to hold a Coronation Durbar at the Imperial City of Delhi. This happy and unique event would indeed be a red-letter day in the annals of the British

connection with India; and it would go a long way in strengthening and cementing the bonds which unite this country to His Majesty's Throne and person. We may be permitted to indulge the hope that His Imperial Majesty may be pleased to signalize his visit by some momentous mark of Imperial favour that shall vividly impress the imagination of the teeming, toiling millions of India with the beneficence of British rule; and enshrine his illustrious memory in the grateful recollections of a devoted people; and evoke and keep alive such an enthusiastic outburst of heartfelt and abiding loyalty as to extinguish for ever all prospective manifestations of sedition and disloyalty; while we on our part, in order to commemorate His Imperial Majesty's Coronation on Indian soil, should initiate and carry through some beneficent project of far-reaching public utility. In the meantime, we all sincerely wish His Majesty and his gracious Consort a long, prosperous and glorious reign, attended with all happiness in the world.

Now that Lord Minto has laid down the reins of office after five years of most arduous and trying work, we desire to pay him our tribute of warm admiration and gratitude for all that he has done for our country and community. You are all aware that he did not succeed to a bed of roses and that very soon after assuming office he found himself confronted with stupendous difficulties of unexampled complexity. You all know with what unflinching courage, patience, judgment and imperturable temper he faced the situation. Owing to circumstances over which he had no control, His Excellency was obliged to curtail dearly cherished popular rights, to wit, the liberty of the press, the right of free speech, of combination, of public trial and the right of public meeting; but the sober sense of all right-thinking men, recognizing the urgency and danger of the situation, was scarcely, if at all, offended. The country remained practically unmoved. Had any inferior man attempted to undertake or enact a quarter of the reactionary and harsh measures which Lord Minto had the misfortune—under the stress of stern necessity—to adopt, the country would probably have been stirred to its depths and, perhaps, set ablaze. The moral of it, of course, is that it is not an evil thing by

itself which so much offends as the manner of doing it. Lord Minto's genial urbanity and charm of manner, his soldierly straightforwardness and transparent honesty and sincerity of purpose were important factors in the successful governance of an Eastern people.

The Reform Scheme

Whatever the genesis of the recent Reform Scheme—whether it was inspired from England by Lord Morely (as assumed by *The Times* of London) or first suggested by Lord Minto himself, as he has repeatedly emphasized—there can be no doubt that on looking round him soon after his arrival in the country, Lord Minto found the prevailing Indian atmosphere to be surcharged with electricity; and, reading aright the signs of the times, he set about devising suitable means to meet the situation, which in the meantime had grown from bad to worse. But nothing daunted and undeterred by bombs, assassinations, conspiracies and outrages (which would have given pause to a less strong man), Lord Minto, while combating and repressing sedition and violent crime with a strong hand, did not deviate a hair's breadth from his appointed goal and pursued the even tenor of his way. We know the result. The Reforms have introduced salutary constitutional changes in the administration of India. By giving the representatives—both elected and nominated—of important interest, and especially of influential minorities, an effective voice in the administration of the country, they have powerfully contributed to the appeasement of legitimate aspirations engendered and fostered by English education. Coupled with the appointment of Indian members to the Imperial and Provincial Executive Councils, and increased facilities for debate, they have also gone a long way towards redeeming the pledges of the late Queen Empress Victoria contained in her gracious Proclamation of 1858, which has been rightly described as the great charter of our rights and privileges.

Lord Minto's generous, statesmanlike and sympathetic attitude towards the great Mohammedan community probably

averted a crisis; for signs were not wanting to show that the young bloods of the community were growing restive and straining at the leash. Had they succeeded in getting out of hand, it would have brought great discredit upon the Mohammedans. We Mohammedan, therefore, have special reason to be extremely grateful to him for his practical recognition of our hardships and claims and for his well-meant efforts to afford us equal opportunities with others, to equalize conditions as far as as in him lay, and to make life more tolerable to us Mohammedans. No proconsul since the stirring days of Lord Ripon of imperishable memory has deserved better of this country and of its people than Lord Minto ; and it is extremely gratifying and refreshing to think that his honoured name excites equal enthusiam among all classes of His Majesty's subjects in India.

Lord Minto's chief, Lord Morely, has also recently resigned office after five years of most anxious and strenuous work. His strength of character, clearness and breadth of vision, disciplined intellect, wide knowledge and grasp of principles, combined with human sympathy, enabled him successfully to to grapple with a crisis, at one dangerous and imminent, and to tide over a time of storm and stress. Being face to face with a serious situation of unusual obscurity and unknown dimensions, Lord Morley assiduously set himself to the task of gathering information at first hand. In order to understand the elements and bearings of the various problems arising out of the situation with which he had to deal, he had the wisdom to appoint two Indians to his Council and to interview and question all sorts of men with Indian experience, in every grade of life, mostly non-officials, whom he could get hold of. For this he has been criticized in some quarters But there can ble little doubt that had Lord Morley relied chiefly on official sources of information, and looked at Indian affairs through official glasses only we should in all probability have been landed in a terrible mess, if not actual disaster. Men who silently control large masses of public opinion in this country seldom approach officials, because they are seldom welcome. Such men, I may add, are not to be found as a rule in the ranks of title-hunters of prosperous landlords.

The New Viceroy, Lord Hardinge

On your behalf I beg respectfully to welcome His Excellency Lord Hardinge of Ponshurst, the august representative of our Gracious Sovereign, who has quietly and without any fuss assumed his high and honourable office within the last few weeks, and to offer our united homage to him. He does not come to us with a flourish of trumpets, pompously announcing his intentions and breathlessly anxious to prescribe the pill of 'efficiency' for every Indian ailment. If 'efficiency' does not aim primarily at securing, as far as possible, the ultimate happiness and contentment of the people, we do not want it. His nomination for the exalted office of Viceroy was hailed with a chrous of approbation from all sides, and as far as I am aware, not a single discordant note was struck. This is a most happy augury for the success of his rule, and for the welfare and continued progress of our country, just emerging from the throes of a violent convulsion. We had heard with immense satisfaction, from his own lips, that he is going to follow and consolidate the wise and liberal policy inaugurated by Lord Minto and Lord Morley. His Excellency, as you are aware, was the trusted companion of our late King Emperor on his European tours, and is a trained diplomat of first-rate ability and a proficient scholar of Persian, Turkish and Russian.

To maintain order and to uphold the law, to watch over the developments of what has been happily styled 'loyal unrest', and to divert it into channels not antagonistic to British rule; to enlarge the functions and responsibilities of local self-government, with special reference to adequate Mohammedan representation on municipal and district boards, and to liberate it, as far as possible, from the trammels of official dictation and unnecessary interference; to inaugurate and extend a well-considered scheme of technical, agricultural, scientific, commercial and primary education; to extend and foster indigenous industries; to develop the agricultural and economic resources of the country; to see whether the time has not arrived to extend, in the interests of agricultural improvements and consequent prosperity, the duration of the periodical settlements of land-revenue; to devise suitable measures to lighten the heavy load of

agricultural indebtedness which is crushing the life out of the vast bulk of our population; to consider the advisability of spending more money upon the extension of irrigation; to examine the expediency and feasibility of establishing a system of short service for the native Indian army; to retrench public expenditure without sacrificing efficiency—are some of the questions which may well engage Lord Hardinge's attention during his term of office. In the meantime, we sincerely hope and pray that no internal disorder or foreign complication may cast its shadow on His Excellency's regime. I may as well venture to say, on your behalf, that he can always count on our loyal support and co-operation in all measures calculated to advance the material, moral and intellectual well-being of the country.

Mohammedans and Politics

We have often been reproached for keeping aloof from politics till so late in the day as the latter end of 1906. Even if today we are politicians it is not so much from choice, I am afraid, as by force of circumstance. I myself think, however, that this long abstention from the active pursuit of politics has debarred us, if from nothing else, at least from the advantages of political training and education so much needed in the changed conditions of the India of to-day. Various causes have contributed to preventing us from joining hands with the Hindus in their political activities; or starting; political activities on our own account; as for instance, the great influence of our late revered leader, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, of blessed memory, who enjoined us to avoid, as far as possible, the thorny paths of politics; a disinclination on our part to embarrass the Government by engaging in political agitation; an instinctive feeling that owing to our widespread deficiency in English education and capacity, we, as a community, should have to play second fiddle in the game of politics; a haunting fear that by descending into the dusty arena of politics and helping to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for others, we should be at once insidiously undermining the authority of Government and unduly promoting the political ascendency—already overpowering—of the great Hindu community; the conviction that the un-

impaired supremacy of the British Government is conducive to the welfare, continued progress, peace of mind and happiness of the Mohammedans; the dearth of influential leaders of commanding ability, endowed with the indispensable gift of eloquence, as well as with imagination, energy and enthusiasm; a certain lofty disdain—born of the spiritual teachings of Islam, of fatalism, and the grand traditions of our glorious past, mingled, perhaps, with a fleeting sense of despair that we have been irretrievably outstripped in the race of life—to enter the lists in competition with men over whom we once held sway for the temporal prizes that the fickle goddess of politics has to offer to her votaries; and last, not least (be it confessed our shame), our invincible apathy and listlessness, an aversion to work and to take trouble, a reluctance to sacrifice our ease and comfort.

The Ferment in the East

But since Sir Syed's advice to us to leave politics alone much water has passed under the bridges, and the slumbering East has been violently stirred by momentous events of deep significance. Japan's political revolution and adoption of Western representative institutions, her marvellous progress in all branches of national life within the last twenty years or so, followed by her astounding victories over Russia—whose imposing power in the Far East was crumpled like match-wood—set all Eastern nations athinking, and gave a tremendous fillip to the demand for representative institutions in countries so widely different in their polities as India, China, Egypt, Persia and Turkey. In our own country many other influences have been silently at work—notably, the elevating effects of Western culture. But the quickening impulse, I believe, came from Japan's overthrow of a great Western Power, which was thought by the world at large to be absolutely invincible. A galvanic shock of unrest went through the entire East.

Therefore, the wave of unrest which first swept over Bengal after its partition and then, with diminishing force, over the rest of India, followed by the ebullitions of frenzy which broke out in different parts of the country, opened men's eyes to the significant signs of the times, to the serious gravity of the situ-

ation, and the militant forces at work. It is not necessary to describe in detail the startling events which followed each other in bewildering succession. Suffice it to say that by great good fortune we had at this critical juncture a soldier-statesman at the head of affairs in this country, and a philosopher-statesman at the helm in England, between whom there was perfect unanimity of sentiment, and who correctly diagnosed the situation. When it became apparent that an enlargement of the Legislative Councils and of their functions, together with other constitutional organic changes, was contemplated by Government, it was felt by some of the leading men in our community that the time had arrived for the Mohammedans to come out into the open, and to claim what was rightfully their due in view of their importance and historical traditions; that they could no longer afford to sulk in their tents, waiting on providence with folded hands and brooding over their departed greatness—unless they wanted to be left out in the cold. This, in brief, led to the formation of the All-India Muslim League in the closing days of 1906; though before that there had been several spasmodic attempts at forming a political association of the Mohammedans to safeguard their interests. We have now, for better or worse, taken the plunge; and whether we swim, float, or sink; it all depends upon ourselves. I can only express the hope that the new-born enthusiasm of my co-religionists will not evaporate, as of yore, with the lapse of time, and that our young men will devote themselves more and more to the study of financial, industrial and economic questions rather than to politics, pure and simple.

Objects of the Muslim League

Besides looking after the interests of our fellow-believers and and promoting loyal feelings towards the British Government, one of the chief objects of our League is to cultivate harmonious relations with other Indian communities, especially with the great sister community of the Hindus. As far as I am aware, no responsible Mohammedan leader has ever entertained any but the most friendly feelings towards the Hindus, especially towards the progressive, enterprising, patriotic, intellectual Bengalis—the despair of Aberigh-Mackay, of Stevans, and, aye, of unimaginative Anglo-India. I sometimes think in my dreams

that if our rulers could only understand the Bengalis, they would be able to understand not only most of the Asiatic races, but the Irish, the Americans and the Junkers of Germany as well ! In spite of the recent lamentable incidents, and the infatuation and aberration of certain misguided sections of the population, I believe that the vast majority of the Bengalis are sound at heart and loyal to the core. Like the Mohammedans (though for different reasons), they have everything to lose and nothing to gain, if the English retire from India. And yet the Bengali is often obstreperous, and now and again truculent ! What is the reason ?

Our great leader, the late lamented Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, in speaking of Hindu and Mohammedans, of the Bengalis, and of the 'Indian nation' has made the following observations, with which, I need scarcely say, we are in cordial agreement :

"Mohammedans and Hindus are the two eyes of India. Injure the one and you injure the other. We should try to become one in heart and soul and act in unison; if united, we can support each other, if not, the effect of one against the other will tend to the destruction and downfall of both.

"I assure you that the Bengalis are the only people in our country whom we can properly be proud of; and it is only due to them that knowledge, liberty and patriotism have progressed in our country. I can truly say that they are really the head and crown of all the communities of Hindustan.

"In the word 'nation' I include both Hindus and Mohammedans, because that is the only meaning which I can attach to it."

Again, His Highness the Aga Khan, our highly honoured leader and President, in the course of inaugural address at the last session of our League, was very emphatic, in view of the larger interests of our common Motherland, on the necessity, the supreme necessity, of a cordial understanding between the two great communities of India. Let me quote from his most admirable and statesman-like speech ;

"Now that we have secured it (i.e , a separate electorate) I hope it will result in a permanent political sympathy and a

genuine *entente cordiale* between the members of the two great sister communities."

"Our first and foremost duty is to prove our active loyalty towards our Sovereign...by our endeavours to strengthen the foundation of British rule in India...by uniting the great sister communities through the bonds of sympathy, affection, and a community of interests."

"In the first place, they (i.e., the Muslims) must co-operate, as representative Indian citizens, with other Indian in advancing the well-being of the country..."

"I have no hesitation in asserting that unless Hindus and Mohammedans co-operate with each other in the general development of the country as a whole, and in all matters affecting their mutual interest, neither will develop to the full its legitmate aspirations, or give full scope to its possibilities. In order to develop their common economic and other interest, both should remember that one is the elder sister of the other, and that India is their common parent ; religious differences should be naturally reduced to the minor position..."

"Our loyalty to the Throne must be absolute, and relations with the Hindus and all other Indian communities who share that loyalty must frankly be most cordial. Otherwise our political activities will tend to the undoing of both, and ultimately prove detrimental even to the British Power. The true interests of the Empire can never lie in a policy of divide and rule..."

Our other great leader, the Rt. Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali, in the encouraging message, replete with sage observations, he was pleased to send us at our last session, is equally emphatic :

"...I sincerely trust that the two great communities whom the Reforms mainly affect will decide to work together in harmony and concord for the good of their common country. They have both to live together, to progress together and in evil days to suffer together. National development, even the fulfilment of the dream of self-government, depends on the co-operation of both races in a spirit of amity and concord."

Hindu-Mohammedan Relations

It will thus be seen that the best sense of our community is agreed on the point that, in the vital interests of our country, in other words, of the Government—because I am firmly persuaded that the best interests of the Government are, in the long run, indissolubly bound up, with the best interests of the country—Hindus and Mohammedans should live at peace and cultivate the most friendly relations with one another. They should be prepared for that mutual compromise, the give-and-take, which is the essence of our modern existence and the secret of its success. But I very much regret to say that the good feeling and happy relations which formerly subsisted between the two communities have been, in some parts of the country, considerably attenuated in recent year ; and a strain has been put on their friendly inter-course on the old footing. As we all desire to bring about a *rapprochement* between the two communities I shall be perfectly frank with my Hindu brethren. I am grieved to say that certain events and incidents have happened within recent years which have given offence to the Mohammedans, and caused many searchings of heart among them. At present I will deal with only one such event, namely, the 'worship' of Sivaji. Let it be granted that the world judges men like Sivaji, Robin Hood, Clive, Dalhousie, Napolean, Bismarck, etc., not by the usual standard of morality applicable to ordinary mortals. But what is the inner meaning of these Sivaji celeberations ? Do they not convey a serious warning to all concerned ? Do they not suggest the revolt of Hinduism against Islam and, by implication, against foreign domination ? The apotheosis of Sivaji gives us a foretaste, as it were, of what the poor Mohammedans have to expect under Hindu hegemony. If, then, our feelings are irritated, is it to be wondered at ? I am, however, glad to note that since a certain firebrand has been removed from the scene of his labours, the cult of Sivaji appears to be dying out.

These suggestively aggressive celebrations, however, to which I have just referred, went a long way in steeling our hearts against yeilding on the question of separate electorates for Mohammedans which is another painful subject to which I

want to refer just for a moment. But even apart from the sinister significance of the deification of Sivaji, Mohammedans would at all events have insisted on a separate electorate for themselves, to ensure their fair representation on the Legislative Councils. Their dominant feeling, I believe, was that if the Hindus chose to sink their differences, and to close up their ranks, they could, with their formidable majority, defeat every Mohammedan candidate in the field. Even if by chance or good fortune, Mohammedans were returned by what are called 'mixed electorates', it would be at the sacrifice of their independence and freedom of action and judgment. The thought was galling to us that we should be for ever tied to the chariot wheels of Sivaji 'worshippers', and dragged at their heels (*sic*), always dependent on their goodwill and favour. The prospect of this novel thraldom alarmed us ; and we naturally desired emancipation from it. We felt that considering the present backward condition of our community and our former predominant position in the country we should be adequately represented on the Legislative Councils—if for nothing else, at least for the benefit of the training and experience they were likely to afford us. Well, the scheme of separate electorates has happily put us in a position effectively to look after our interests ; has saved our countenance ; preserved our *amour propre* ; averted the danger of increasing bitterness and estrangement of feelings between the two communities, which would have inevitably resulted from the freaks and haphazard chances of 'mixed elections' ; and, above all, put us in the proper frame of mind to co-operate cordially with our Hindu brethren for the advancement and glory of our common country. I venture to think that if any educated man of strong common sense, any experienced man with the faculty of correctly applied imagination, were to reflect for a moment, he would be convinced that if mixed electorates alone had the exclusive power of returning members, the consequences would have been disastrous to the best interests of the country. How ? By causing an ever-widening breach between the two communities, and a permanent and incurable alienation of feeling. Need I point to our recent election experiences ? Is it not a fact that in very many instances secret ill-will has been created between Hindu and Hindu, and,

for the matter of that, between Mohommedan and Mohammedan ? Let us take account of human nature as we find it. Our Hindu friends by their vehement opposition to separate electorates, I am afraid, have unwittingly narrowly escaped from putting the knife to the throat of our poor, dear Motherland for which they profess, in all sincerity, so much solicitude. The cry of 'unity' being in danger is a spurious cry. We don't want a paper unity, but a genuine union of hearts in the interests of our common country. Let us, therefore, hear no more of the foolish twaddle about the Mohammedans erecting an iron wall of disunion between the Hindus and Mohammedans. And are our Hindu friends not satisfied ? Have they not a permanent, standing majority ? What more do they want ? Why do they grudge our separate, adequate representation ? Being secure in their overwhelming majority, it looks as if under the plausible plea of unity they want to lord it over us, to have it all their own way, and to stifle our feeble voice. Is it fair ? Can it conduce to peace ? Yes, peace, which is our greatest interest. I appeal to the good sense and patriotism of the Hindu leaders, and I have no misgivings as to what their response would be. I honestly and sincerely believe that adequate and independent Mohammedan representation on our Legislative Councils and municipal, local and district boards is absolutely neccssary in the present condition of India and of Muslim public feeling, for peace' sake, for the uninterrupted progress of our dear country, and in the sacred interests of good-fellowship, if for nothing else.

Barring the question of employment in the public services of the State and the Urdu-Hindi question, there is hardly any question of public importance, as far as I can see, on which the Mohammedans are not in substantial agreement with their Hindu brethren. That being so, I venture to suggest that Hindu and Mohammedan leaders, and especially our Hindu and Mohammedan legislators, should from time to time meet each other in formal conferences, for the purpose of exchanging notes and holding friendly discussions on all questions affecting the general well-being of the country. In this way they can be of very great assistance to each other, and also to Government. They

can render great service to their country by removing misunderstandings, composing differences, and by promoting and diffusing an atmosphere of mutual forbearance, tolerance and goodwill. Altogether, I venture to anticipate the happiest results if this course is followed.

Proposed Conference of Leaders

In this connection, I heartily welcome Sir William Wedderburn's wise proposal, cordially endorsed by our leaders (His Highness the Aga Khan and the Rt. Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali), to hold a friendly conference, in the course of the next few days, of some of the influential leaders of all communities. I sincerely hope that a satisfactory settlement of all outstanding differences will be reached at the proposed Conference, and a *modus vivendi* arranged for future co-operation. The most serious feature of the situation, however, is that there appears to be a tendency in some quarters to accentuate these differences. All I can say is—as you must all feel—that so long as these differences remain, our country's cause, which is already suffering, may be irretrievably damaged and all progress arrested. But I have every confidence that the leaders on both sides with a single eye to the country's good, will rise superior to every petty consideration.

Government Attitude to Hindu-Mohammedan Relations

It is sometimes hinted in some quarters that the Government in its hearts of hearts does not desire that the Hindus and Mohammedans should ever come together ; that it is always trying, though with extreme caution and cunning, to play off one community against the other ; and that, finally, it is to the advantage of Government that the two communities should always be at loggerheads. Of course all this is utter nonsense. I do not, however, know whether I am perpetrating a 'blazing indiscretion, in referring to such fanciful matters. But it is no use disguising the fact that such matters are being discussed daily in almost every important city and town of India. Though I yield to no one—not even to Lord Curzon—in my admiration of the splendid Civil Service of India, I am

however, bound to confess that the conduct of some of its members, here and there, has sometimes lent some colour to such baseless conjectures and insinuations as those just alluded to. As soon as a new Collector or Deputy Commissioner arrives in a district people are keen to find out whether he is pro-native, pro-Hindu. or pro-Mohammedan. Any public servant who does not hold the scales even, who is swayed by personal predilections, or who is openly unsympathetic, is a traitor to his country. I do not think, however, that any mother's son outside of Bedlam believes for a moment that Government wants to sow discord between the two great communities of India. But if this sordid game were ever tried, it would—while gratuitously increasing a hundredfold the anxieties, cares and difficulties of Government—inevitably end in disaster. The true interests of the people and of the Government lie in the peaceful and ordered development of the country, which can only be secured by mutual co-operation between the officers of the Government and the leaders of the people, without distinction of race or creed. That is the secret of successful rule in this country.

Employment in the Public Services

The question of employment in the public services to which I have just referred has, unfortunately, very often formed a bone of contention between the Hindus and the Mohammedans. This subject, which affects only the educated classes, who form but an infinitesimal part of the population, has from time to time excited keen interest in our community. We ought not, I think, to forego our right to claim fair share of the loaves and fishes of State ; besides, it is a great advantage to be trained in our public offices and, especially, to be associated with the practical work of administration, particularly in the higher branches of State service. But I beg to ask you, if, say, all the Judgeships and Commissionerships in the country were filled exclusively by Mohammedans, in what way would that help to uplift the great mass of our people ? We ought not, in our selfish interest, to think only of ourselves ; but we ought rather to think more and more of the lower orders of our people,

how to ameliorate their lot, and to raise their standard of comfort. This can only be done by reforming our social customs, by helping to extend primary and technical education, by developing trade and agriculture, our native industries and the economic resources of our country. How to do these things are precisely the questions which ought to engage the earnest thought, attention and study of our educated young men and of their elders. Here is a profitable field of development for those who have plenty to leisure on their hands and do not stand in need of service. The first thing to do is to read up the whole literature available on the subject you are studying, and then to form your own opinion.

Developing Agriculture

Our greatest industry is agriculture, in which about 80 per cent of our population is engaged; and on its prosperity depends the prosperity of the whole country. If our crops are good : trade expands, the railway receipts mount up, the consumption of salt goes up, stamps and excise receipts increase; in fact the effects are immediately reflected in every branch of the revenue. But the conditions under which land is held in this country do not favour its development. In the first place, the State revenue demand on land varies from province to province; and in some provinces is excessive, to say the least—as for instance, in the Central Provinces, in the capital of which we are assembled to-day. From the accumulated experience of ages it has been found that from one-fifth to one-sixth of the total gross produce of land is a fair rent of India, which enables our poor, afflicted peasantry—who are, perhaps, the most frugal and thrifty, and withal (except in Bengal) the most wretched in the world—to lay by something in fat years to serve them as a stand-by against rainy days; for, owing to the vagaries of rainfal, no industry is more subject to the vicissitudes of fortune than agriculture. You are very probably aware that between 50 and 60 million of our countrymen, Hindus and Mohammedans—about the total strength of Islam in India—continually hover on the borderline which divides destitution from starvation. The unutterable pathos, gloom and tragedy of their lives, their ceaseless toil and

and struggle for bare existence, can only be realized by those who have come into personal contact with them. Is there no remedy for this state of things ?

Another potent factor which hampers the development of land is the periodical settlements of land-revenue in most of the provinces of India after every 15, 20 or 30 years. Landlords, peasant-proprietors, farmers and tenants are all unwilling, in view of the short duration of settlements, to lay out sufficient capital on improvements for fear of increased assessments at the next periodic revision of revenue. If the period of settlements were extended to 60 years (the normal span of human life in India) in all major provinces, subject to a minimum term of 40 years in less economically developed tracts (where an extension of irrigational facilities or the occupation of waste lands may reasonably be expected), a great impetus would be imparted to the rapid development of land. Any temporary loss of revenue would be more than recouped by the tide of prosperity which would flow from the productive development of the resources of land, and which would, in numerous indirect ways, amply replenish the exchequer.

Another incubus which weighs down agriculture is the heavy load of indebtedness which hangs like round a millstone the necks our cultivating classes. Great credit is due to the Government for organizing Co-operative Credit Societies, for the supply of capital to cultivators on easy terms for productive puropses, and to encourage habits of thrift. Judging from the results already achieved, the co-operative credit movement under the fostering care of Government has, I believe, taken permanent root in the country; and the organization and multiplication of Credit Societies and of the Central Banks which finance them, opens up the vista of a bright future for our sorely troubled cultivators, enabling them to depend more and more on co-operative effort to better their lot, and to depend less and less on the wily money-lender. Here is a field of activity in which Hindus and and Mohammedans can patriotically co-operate with the Government for the welfare of our poor, hard-working cultivators, who stand so much in need of our practical sympathy.

Technical Education

There is another important subject to which I want to draw your attention. Much of the prevalent unrest, I am afraid, is due to the unemployment of large numbers of the educated classes. How to find a profitable outlet for the energies of these men is one of the most difficult problems of the day. For almost every post in the country I believe there are more than four dozen competent candidates; in other words, the supply exceeds the demand by about fiftyfold; and with the rapid strides that education is making, the supply will go on increasing at an accelerating ratio. In only too many cases the effect of English education on any empty stomach is to breed discontent, disaffection, fierce denunciations of Government and all its ways, anarchist conspiracies, outbreaks of savegery and violent crime. It is not, then, time to check the breeding of a race of malcontents and disappointed place-hunters all over the country by reforming our educational policy, without detriment, however, to the interest of secondary and higher education, and at the same time widely extending technical, industrial and scientific education throughout India ? At all events, I trust the Government will be pleased to evolve, at an early date, a satisfactory scheme of technical education, which in course of time, I hope, will provide useful careers for your youths, and go a long way towards checking the growing discontent in the land, which is very often the result of a purely literary education and subsequent unemployment.

Royal Boons for Agriculture and Industry

I have already referred to His Majesty's projected visit in India. We may take it for granted that in celebration of the Coronation a plentiful shower of honours will descend on the country, and a large number of prisoners will be released. Speaking of honours, however, reminds me that in 1819, the then Nawab Vazeer of Oudh, Ghazi-ud-din Hyder, was induced by Lord Hastings to assume the title of 'Shah'. In every province of India, I believe, there are Chiefs who are entitled to a salute of guns, except in Oudh; though I am told that some 30 years or so ago there was a nobleman in Oudh, and after

his death, his widow, who were thus honoured. But neither the shower of honours nor the release of prisoners will appeal to the imagination of the masses. I believe there are hardly any greater boons than the extension of the period of settlements to 60 years (to which I have just referred), and some measure of protection for our nascent industries. If, with the consent of the Indian and Home authorities, His Gracious Majesty were to announce the conferment of these boons at the Coronation Durbar at Delhi; it would send a thrill of joy and thankfulness throughout the length and breadth of India, perpetuate his blessed memory for generations to come, and draw closer the ties which bind the Princes and people of India to His Majesty's Throne and Person. While we, on our part, Hindus and Mohammedans alike, should also do our humble duty by raising to his illustrious memory, in every province, a first grade model technical college—just as we in the United Provinces have founded in his memory at Lucknow, by public subscription, a splendid medical college when he came out India five years ago as Prince of Wales.

Aligarh College and University

May I be permitted, further, so submit on behalf of His Imperial Majesty's Mohammedan subjects in India that, should His Majesty be graciouly pleased to visit our poor College at Aligarh (in which all our hopes of future advancement are centred), no greater honour could be conferred on the entire Mohommedan community, and no greater encouragement could be extended to the cause of Mohammedan education ? And should King Emperor George V be pleased to grace our College with a visit, is it too much to expect that, in honour and memory of His Imperial Majesty's visit, His Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad, His Highness the Nawab of Rampur and other benevolent Mohammedan Chiefs will not refuse to lend us a helping hand in establishing a Mohammedan University at Aligarh, to be named after His Majesty ?

Reduction of Military and Civil Expenditure to Finance Development

One of the questions which may be expected to claim Lord

Hardinge's attention is the growth of our military expenditure, which in the course of the last nine or 10 years has increased, I believe, by about 8 or 9 crores. After the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Convention of September 1907, which settled many outstanding difficulties affecting the interests of the two Powers in Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet, it might have been expected that our military expenditure would be gradually reduced, consistently with the safety of India; but if this was found to be impossible, then a portion at least of our military expenditure would be borne by the British exchequer, in consideration of the fact that we are maintaining our present forces in excess of our requirements, and therefore not solely for our own defence, but also partly for Imperial purposes. The Anglo-Russian Convention "has been observed by both parties to it", said Lord Hardinge just before he left England to assume the Governor-Generalship of India, "with the utmost loyalty, and has happily resulted in the mutual co-operation of the two Powers for the maintenance of peace in Asia. The advantage to India of this peaceful development is incalculable, since the Russian menace has been dispelled and the bogey of a Russian invasion has been laid, thus giving greater opportunity and freedom to those entrusted with administration in India to consider many social problems affecting the welfare and development of the Indian people." I am afraid, however, that the immediate prospect before us is by no means bright; because for the progress and development of the country, for the extension of primary and technical education, we require more money than can be looked for from the normal growth of our revenue. Where the money is to come from I know not—unless we make retrenchment in our civil and military expenditure, and curtail our railway grant. Lord Hardinge will have to take his courage in both hands to do these things.

Foreign Affairs

If I may be permitted to cast a glance at foreign affairs, I should like to say that we in India noted with deep concern and alarm that, in consequence of the recent British note to Persia, on the subject of policing the trade routes in Southern

Persia (in which, by the way, as far as I can judge, there was nothing incompatible with the integrity and independence of Persia), some Persians and Turks appealed to the German Emperor for some sort of intervention. It would seem, I am afraid, as if there is something amiss in latter-day British diplomacy that our foreign co-religionists should begin to look more and more to the War-Lord of Germany for assistance and advice, rather than to England, which is the greatest 'Musalman' Power in the world, and the renowned protector and friend of notionalities struggling to be free. It would increase England's hold on the Islamic world if Turkish and Persian loans could be successfully placed on the London market, instead of in Paris or Berlin. Will our English financiers rise to the occasion ?

Mohammedan Appointments to the Executive Council

I think I have already briefly touched on some of the pressing questions of the day. It is to be regretted that no Mohammedan has been made a member of the Executive Councils of either Bombay, Madras or Bengal. I trust that on a vacancy occurring a competent Mohammedan will be appointed, and that Lord Hardinge will be pleased to take steps in due course for the establishment of Executive Councils in the United Provinces and in the Punjab.

English-Indian Relations

I am afraid I have detained you much too long. There is, however, one point on which I wish to dwell for a moment, namely, the relations between the rulers and the ruled. On the cordiality of their social relations depends, to a large extent, the smooth working of the machinery of Government. Whilst most Englishmen, as a rule, are first-rate gentlemen, frank, courteous, considerate, honest and upright, there are, however, some, I regret to say, who are inclined to be rude and arrogant, and who habitually act on the pleasing theory of those heartless fishermen who hold that fish cannot feel. I want to assure these men that we, Indians, are not fish; why, even the fish-eating Bengali is not fish, as we all know from painfully startling

experience. Few Englishmen have any idea what a sore point this is with educated Indians. We, Indians, are naturally quickly and warmly responsive to courtesy and kindness ; but we deeply resent incivility and insolence. As a loyal subject of the Crown, I desire to impress upon all those Englishmen who are pleased to think that Indians are fish that cannot feel, that an affront offered to an educated or refind Indian is like—what shall I say ?—converting a friend into a bitter foe. And the enmity of an educated man is not to be lighty despised ; for it works incalculable harm in diverse ways undreamt of by unimaginative Englishmen. The feeling that the affronted belongs to a subject race, and that for various reasons he cannot retaliate, accentuates the mischief all the more. "The eradication of insolence, on the one hand, and feeling of inferiority and mortification, on the other, between the rulers and the ruled" is, according to the Hon'ble Syed Ali Imam, "one of the many grave questions in practical politics in India that equally affect all classes of our countrymen." In the interests of peace and goodwill neither the rulers nor the ruled can afford to be rude to one another. Most of the evils which afflict us in this world are generally the result of ignorance. All honour, therefore, to those amiable, well-intentioned men who are trying to bring about a better understanding between the rulers and the ruled, by bringing them together on all possible occasions. The more they come to know of each other, the better they will like each other and respect each other. But without mutual forbearance and respect no good understanding can be lasting.

Working the Reformed Administration

In inaugurating the Reforms Scheme, the Government has broken new ground ; and a fresh chapter has opened in the administrative methods of this country. In calling representative Indian opinion to its aid, and giving it an effective voice in the affairs of the country, the Government has proved once more that it is both enlightened and progressive, and that it is animated by a sincere desire to rule the country in the interests of the people. A solemn duty rests upon our countrymen of all races and creeds to co-operate whole-heartedly with the

Government in its endeavours to promote the common weal. On the success of the present enterprise depends, in great measure, the further extension of what, in the language of hyperbole, may be called the 'sovereignty' of the people controlled by the Government ; for, if we prove ourselves worthy of the trust generously reposed in us, it is inconceivable that the Government can stand still, or refuse to associate us more and more in the governance of the country. In the fulness of time we may confidently hope for a further enlargement of popular liberties. If I might take the liberty of addressing a word or two to our Mohammedan Councilors, I would venture to say that the honour of our community in a manner rests in their hands ; and every Mohammedan, therefore, sincerely hopes and trusts that by their knowledge, application, moderation and capacity for intelligent speech and clear thinking, they will bring credit on the great community to which they belong, and also show themselves able to take a worthy part in the deliberations on the affairs of State.

Self-Reliance

We have been often taunted by unfriendly critics that on every conceivable occasion we desire to be put under a special course of treatment and to be spoon-fed. Even our best friends who appreciate our difficulties, drawbacks and disabilities, and who sincerely sympathize with our legitimate claims, hopes and aspirations, have sometimes regretfully noted a certain tendency on our part showing that we rather prefer being treated on most occasions with special favour. If there is really any tendency in this direction, it must be discouraged ; for it can only end in demoralizing our own community, which would be a great calamity. We must stand on our legs and walk by ourselves ; for, if we get accustomed to crutches, we shall be crippled for life ; and above all, we must remember that competition is the breath of modern life.

Appeal for Support to Muslim Education

The Raja of Bhinga, an enlightened nobleman of Oudh,

has within the last year or two given about 10 or 12 lakhs towards founding a School and Boarding House in Benares for the education of Kshatriyas, one of the noblest races of men that ever trod the earth, but, educationally, as backward as we. You might be tempted to think that the Raja Saheb Bahadur must be an immensely rich man. Not at all ; for he pays Government revenue of only about a lakh and a quarter. It is interesting to recall that the Raja Saheb Bahadur of Bhinga has thoughtfully named his school after the sagacious and strenuous ruler of the United Provinces, Sir John Hewett, who, with the prescience of a statesman, has rightly perceived that the true and vital interests of the country lie in the direction of a steady extension of education—chiefly primary, female, scientific and industrial—and a progressive development of the economic resources of the country. Only a few years ago another Rajput noblemen, the late Raja Saheb Bahadur of Awa in the Etah district of the United Provinces, donated, I believe, a like sum towards establishing a similar institution at Agra. Of all the sons of Islam in India is there no one who can pluck up courage to emulate the noble example of these munificent Indian benefactors of their race ? We are all very properly proud of our dear Aligarh College. But are there any voluntary and honorary workers there as they have at the Central Hindu College of Benares ? Speaking of Benares reminds me of the ruling powers which have lately been granted to His Highness the Maharaja Saheb Bahadur of Benares. I desire to congratulate him on the accession of dignity which has come to him, and which, I doubt not, he has richly deserved. I feel sure that His Highness will follow the noble example of the British Government and make no distinctions between the various races and creeds of his subjects.

And how I have done. I am afraid I have exhausted your patience. I have a firm faith in the virility and destiny of my nation ; and I am convinced that if we only know our minds and are unwavering in our loyalty to Government, we cannot fail to exercise a most wholesome influence on the conduct of public affairs. Already bright future is unfolding itself before our eyes, in which we are destined, if we are only true to our-

selves and to our country, to play an ever-increasing and prominent part. We must never forget that we are the scions of a famous race which once made history, and that India is our Motherland, the glorious heritage handed down to us by our illustrious forbears, to share with our Hindu brethren and to transmit it unimpaired to our posterity, marching hand in hand with our Hindu compatriots, under the guidance and protecting shield of our English rulers, along the path of moral, intellectual and material progress.

5

MUSLIM INTERESTS AND STATUTORY SAFEGUARDS*

It is with feelings of the utmost diffidence, almost verging on trepidation, that I stand before you here to-day in obedience to your summons to preside over the deliberations of this august assembly, the Fifth Session of the All-India Muslim League. When I cast my eyes upon this distinguished audience and the brilliant galaxy or leaders of community from the various provinces, representing the wealth, the culture and talent of Islam in India, I feel surprised that your choice should have fallen on my unworthy self; and when, looking back from the present to the past, I call to mind the muster-roll of the names of the noble sons of Islam who have graced this Chair during the past session of this august body, my heart fails within me at the thought of the magnitude of the task which you in your goodness have called upon me to perform to-day. Believe me when I say that I look upon the honour you have so graciously conferred upon me as the crowning ambition of an Indian Muslim's life or self-sacrifice and whole-hearted devotion to the best interests of his country and his community. I regret that I cannot escape the thought that I owe this signal honour more to the indulgence with which you have accepted what little services I may have rendered to my community than to any intrinsic merit or worth in my humble self. Permit me, therefore, to offer you my most heartfelt thanks not only for the great honour you have conferred on me by electing me to preside over your deliberations, but also for the warmth and cordiality of splendid reception you have just now accorded to me. I venture to hope that the same kindliness of feeling and indulgent sympathy which prompted you to confer this honour on me will also induce you to overlook my failings and short-

*Presidential address delivered by Nawab Salimullah Khan at the Calcutta session held on 3–4 March, 1912.

comings in the discharge of the onerous and responsible duties of the office to which you have been pleased to call me to-day.

It is now barely five years ago that the inaugural meeting of the League was held at Dacca in December 1906. We in Eastern Bengal were then passing through one of the severest crises which Islam has had to face since the commencement of British rule in this country. The sense of a common danger threatening our very existence as a community, and the imminent peril to which our rights and liberties were exposed, made us close up our ranks and take counsel of the veteran leaders of Muslim thought all over India. This was the first inception of the League; and after deliberation, it was launched into being as the chamption of our cause and the trusted exponent of our thoughts and aspiration in the political life of our community in this country. The unselfish labours of Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk Bahadur and the munificence of His Highness the Aga Khan, who has been the President of the League since its very beginning, together with the exertions of its energtic Secretary, the late Mr. Aziz Mirza (may his soul rest in peace), enabled it to get over the early struggles of its infancy and contributed no little to its unprecedented success within so short a time. Looking around me to-day, I can well perceive how successfully the League has enlisted the sympathies of the leaders of Muslim thought in India; and I hope I will be pardoned a little legitimate pride in having been fortunate enough to initiate the proceedings which gave the League its birth in my native city of Dacca.

I feel I cannot let this opportunity pass without referring to an event which has saddened our hearts and cast a gloom over us all. The sudden demise of Mr. Aziz Mirza has been an irreparable loss to the League and the community, and has come to me with all the bitterness of the loss of a personal friend. In the freshness of my grief, I cannot dwell at length on all he did for our community; but no enumeration of his services is necessary, as they are well known to all who have had anything to do with guiding the League through the troublous days of its past career. I hope his noble example will inspire

his successor to follow in his footsteps in a spirit of unselfish devotion to the best interests of our community.

Gentlemen, before proceeding formally to the consideration and discussion of the various subjects in the programme before us, I consider it my duty to refer to an event which, unprecedented in the varied annals of this continent, has stirred the hearts of the Indian peoples to an extent unknown before. I allude to the recent august visit of Their Gracious Majesties the King Emperor and the Queen Empress, undertaken at great personal sacrifices, out of Their Majesties' unbounded love for the peoples of India. The wealth and imagery of the English language have been exhausted by the distinguished love, the heartfelt devotion and fervent loyalty with which Their Majesties have been greeted everywhere in India, and His Majesty himself has set the seal on all the varied accounts of the Royal visit and of its far-reaching consequences in the several Royal messages to the Princes and peoples of India, and recently in the speech from the Throne, which are all full of that felicity of expression, that purity of diction, that broadminded statesmanship and overflowing love for his subject which are inseparable from all the utterances of our Gracious Sovereign. For me, therefore, to attempt an account of the Royal visit or of the loyalty and enthusiasm it naturally evoked among the various classes of His Majesty's Indian subjects would be, in the words of a great English poet, 'wasteful and ridiculous excess'. No description, however life-like or graphic, can convey an adequate idea of the scenes which were witnessed in India during that all-too-brief a period. In the midst of the gorgeous pageants which greeted Their Majesties in their triumphal progress throughout India, the personality of the King Emperor always stood out bright, majestic, serene, full of kingly dignity, and yet intensely human in the gracious sympathy with which His Majesty accepted the heartfelt homage of all classes of his subjects. And, to add lustre to these scenes, there was by the side of His Majesty that august lady, the Queen Emperess, justly styled the type of perfect British womanhood, who will always live in history as the first British Queen who graciously consented to tear hereself away from her children at home to

testify, by her presence in India, to her love for the Indian peoples, Long will these royal figures live in our hearts, enshrined in a halo of devotion and loyalty which has never before been surpassed, and to which the future historian will seldom find a parallel in any age or clime. To us, the Indian Musalmans, His Majesty possesses the additional fascination of being the ruler of a larger Musalman population than any other sovereign on the face of the globe. The sceptre wielded by His Majesty the King Emperor is also the symbol of protection for a very large fraction of the entire Musalman population of the world, and we in India rejoice that our interests are in such safe keeping and so well guarded against those internal and external commotions which prevent a people from devoting its energies to mental, moral or material advancement. No wonder then that the Musalmans were so conspicuous in their demonstration of loyalty to their Sovereign, for their loyalty is a deep and abiding sentiment, which nothing can change, and in this respect they yield to no section of the community.

I need not detain you long by referring to the epoch-making Durbar, or the historic ceremonies which attended it. These heart-enthralling events will supply memories which will be amongst the most cherished possessions of the Indian peoples and will fill the brightest and the most glorious pages in Indian history. I cannot, however, pass on to other matters without referring to what are called the Durbar announcements, one of which has unfortunately saddened Musalman hearts and cast a sombre shadow over Musalman homes in East Bengal. I will, however, refer to only four of these announcements and take them up in order.

Transfer of the Capital

First, as regards the transfer of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi. We in Eastern Bengal are not much concerned with the effects, immdiate or remote, of the transfer of the capital; but none the less we rejoice, because our brethren in the United Provinces and the Punjab will be benefited by the change. We rejoice, because the high officials who control the destinies of India will naturally now be in close touch with so remarkable

a centre of Muslim intellectual activity as Aligarh, such refined seats of Muslim culture as are to be found in the principal cities of the United Provinces, such exemplary types of Muslim manhood as the virile Musalmans of the Punjab. We rejoice with them, and pray to the Almighty Disposer of events that this momentous change of the transfer of the capital to Delhi may be for the good of all classes of the people, and that it may usher in an era of progress for Islam in those parts, which may redound to the glory of our community all over India. May the heart of Islam be resuscitated and vivified even as the historic city of Delhi will come to new life in this restoration to her of her past dignity, and may the ancient glories of Islam be rivived a hundredfold under the aegis of British rule, so that our future generations may hold aloft the banner of culture, progress and civilization as our forefathers did, when the mighty flag of the Musalman Emperors floated triumphantly over the walls of of Delhi.

Annulment of Partition

I am now forced to refer to another Durbar announcement which compels me to say some bitter truths, but on which I cannot keep altogether silent, for I am sure my silence would be misunderstood. I am soory I have got to take the risk of saying things which may perhaps expose me to contumely; but I feel that I cannot let this opportunity pass without an attempt at expressing our real feelings over a matter which weighs so heavily on our hearts—I mean and annulment of the Partition. I hope I will not be misunderstood. I am not one of those who used to look upon the Partition, in itself, as the only panacea for all our evils. The Partition gave us a great opportunity to bestir ourselves, and it awakened in our hearts the throbbings of a new national life which went pulsating through the various sections of our community in Eastern Bengal. I hope, gentlemen, you will believe me when I assure you that the Musalmans of East Bengal supported the Partition, not out of enmity to our Hindu brethren or at the bidding of the Government, but because we felt sure that the new administrative arrangements in East Bengal would afford us ample opportunities for self-improvement. We felt sure that the

people of East Bengal, particularly the Musalmans, would be immensely benefited by a sympathetic administration easily accessible to them and always ready to devote its time and attention exclusively to their welfare. As for ourselves, the Musalmans of East Bengal, we came to realize for the first time in our history that we too had rights and privileges as British subjects, and that it was only necessary for us to put our own shoulders to the wheel to free ourselves from that state of servile dependence on a dominant community in which we had been living before the Partition. How far we took advantage of these opportunities of self-improvement offered to us, it is now needless for me to discuss. This is now an integral part of the history of the East Bengal districts for the six years (1905-1911) during which the Partition remained in force.

Our ill-wishers at once perceived that the Partition would necessarily bring to the fore the long neglected claims of the Musalmans of East Bengal, and although we never got more than what was justly our due, what little we gained was so much a loss to them. We regretted that this should be so, but it was unavoidable. It was perhaps unavoidable also that the philanthropy of our opponents should not be equal to the occasion, for they saw in the maintenance of the Partition a possibility of the Musalmans of East Bengal regaining a portion of their well-deserved rights as citizens of the British Empire. Those who are forced to give up a portion of their long-enjoyed monopoly, however unjustifiable in nature and origin, will readily understand the feelings of our enemies after the Partition. It was, therefore, only natural that they started a vigorous agitation to have the Partition annulled and to secure a reversion to the old order of things. Over the vehemence of this agitation, the excesses to which some of the agitators could go, and the violent crimes of which they became guilty in giving expression to their pent-up feelings against the Government, I would draw a veil, for they are matters of public notoriety and will soon pass into history. Seditious writings in the press were backed up by revolutionary speeches on the platform, and a band of irresponsible agitators roamed at large over the country to instil into the respec-

tive minds of the youths the deadly poison of anarchical ideas. To give effect to their disloyal feelings against the Government, the agitators organized a boycott of British goods, and under colour of supporting an economic movement, sought to inflame the minds of the ignorant masses against Britain and its people. For some time the whole of Bengal seemed to be in the throes of a violent revolution and there was hardly any peace in the land. Political murders were followed by political dacoities, and the officials entrusted with the maintenance of law and order were harassed in a way which would have exhausted even the patience of job.

The reason for all this violent agitation was not far to seek. The agitators themselves alleged that Bengali sentiment had been outraged by placing them under two separate administrations, and that the Government wanted to injure their interests by placing them in a minority. It is a pity that this specious excuse for all this violent agitation and sedition should have been accepted by Government and believed by shrewd politicians like His Highness the Aga Khan. The real cause of the Bengali opposition to the Partition lay far deeper than in the plausible excuse of outraged sentiments, and I do not wish to repeat what I have already said on this point.

The Musalmans naturally refused to join the agitation because it was so violenty opposed to their feelings of loyalty, and because it was directed against a measure which had proved of so much benefit to their interests. The agitators strained every nerve to win them over to their side and seduce them from their loyalty, but without success. Those who know the utter helplessness of the Musalmans at the hands of their Bengali landlord, lawyer or creditor, will easily have an idea of the tremendous sacrifices which Musalmans had to make in rallying on the side of law and order. Bitter feelings arose between the two communities—not on account of the Partition, as the Government of India seem to imply in their Despatch, but because the Musalmans refused to join the agitators in their seditious conspiracies against the Government.

Vigorous measures were then adopted by the Government to vindicate its authority, and although they brought about an

apparent calm they inflamed the minds of the agitators more fully against the Government. Gradually, the position of affairs was this—on the one side there was the community of agitators with, in many cases, wealth, education and influence to back them, and on the other, there was the loyal community, both of Hindus and Musalmans, who had faced the onslaught of the agitators and incurred their bitter hostility in supporting the Government.

All at once the Government of India decided upon the annulment of Partition, based, as they have said, on broad grounds of administrative expediency, but affected in a way which to the popular mind conveyed the impression of having been exacted by clamour and agitation. The ignorant masses understand nothing about constitutional struggles, and by them the anti-Partition agitation and its apparent successes were regarded as the outcome of a trial of strength between the Bengali politician and the Government. When the Partition was annulled, the popular interpretation was that the Government had been defeated, and the exultant agitators in their hour of triumph did all they could to exaggerate the importance of their victory. The result has been a serious blow to British prestige all over the country, especially in East Bengal. But this is not all. The annulment of the Partition had all the appearance of a ready concession to the clamours of an utterly seditious agitation. It has appeared to put a premium on sedition and disloyalty, and created an impression in the minds of irresponsible masses that even the Government can be brought down on its knees by a reckless and persistent defiance of constituted authority. Moreover, it has discredited British rule to an extent which is deeply to be regretted. It has hitherto been felt throughout the East that the word of the British Government is its bond, and that, come what may, Government cannot go back on its plighted word. Anything which weakens this belief must irreparably injure British prestige in India and the East in general.

To us, the Musalmans of East Bengal, the annulment means the deprivation of those splendid opportunities at self-improve-

ment which we had secured by the Partition. But it is not the loss of these opportunities merely, heavy as that is, that forms the burden of grief over the annulment of the Partition. It is the manner in which the change has been brought about without, ever warning or consulting us, which adds to the poignancy of our grief. I may fairly claim that though we should doubtless have urged our views strongly, our subsequent action has shown that we would have felt that Government by consulting us had shown its full confidence in our loyalty. And had there even been a chance of a Mohammedan agitation in East Bengal, the mere fact that the announcement had been made by His Gracious Majesty himself would have sufficed to render it impossible. We preferred to restrain ourselves from the course which might have commended itself on the first impulses of the moment, and did not which to embarrass Government by agitation against an administrative measure which, however galling to our feelings, has had the impress of the Royal assent and approval. We hope we have succeeded in setting an example of genuine loyalty and willing obedience to the words of our Sovereign which can stand the severest tests.

The Other Announcements

From a discussion of this sad topic of the annulment of the Partition, it is a real pleasure to refer to two other announcements of the Durbar which will undoubtedly prove to be of lasting benefit to the Indian peoples. The munificent grant of Rs. 50 lakhs for the advancement of education comes very opportunely at a time when the ferment of new ideas in the East has led to a great educational renascence in India, and to an eager craving for education amongst all the various sections of the community. The spread of education in all its branches has been one of inestimable blessing of British rule in India, and anything that serves to foster education is a real boon to the peaple. I have no doubt that the Government will be able to allot the grant very judiciously, and that the money will serve to fructify many a field of education which would otherwise have been barren for want of pecuniary aid. I hope I wlll be pardoned if I put in a plea for a preferential treatment

of the Eastern Bengal districts and pray for an allotment exclusively for the advancement of education in that area.

The Royal announcement of the pension of the Shamsul-Ulemas and Mahamahopadhyas is yet another tangible proof of His Majesty's solicitude for the votaries of learning. These servants have generally not enough of the riches of the world, and this Royal grant will now place them above sordid material wants. It is to be hoped that they will henceforth be able to pursue their noble calling unhindered by pecuniary cares and anxieties, and serve by their labours to extend the ever-widening bounds of human knowledge and culture.

Mr. Gokhale's Bill

I have just referred to a great educational renascence in India. It appears to me that the immediate effects of this renascence are to be seen, among others, in the momentous movements for two great universities at Aligarh and Benares, and the eager enthusiasm with which the country as a whole has welcomed Mr. Gokhale's Bill The question of a system of free primary education for the masses has been agitating the minds of the leaders of Indian thought for some time. In my opinion the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has rendered a signal service to the future of primary education in this country by the elaborate scheme he has worked out and which he has so ably formulated in his Bill. I feel it my duty to accord my whole-hearted sympathy to the principle of Mr. Gokhale's Bill, for I feel convinced that unless some action is taken in the way suggested by Mr. Gokhale, the cause of primary education will continue to be relegated to the cold shade of neglect. The apathy with which we have hitherto allowed our masses to pass their days in dense ignorance and superstition appears to me to be almost a crime. All the efforts that have been made in this country towards the advancement of education have hitherto been confined mostly to the cause of higher education. It is time that this apathy to the cause of primary education should be removed. That this primary education should

be free is, perhaps, universally accepted; but in order that any scheme this sort of education may be effective, it should also be to a certain extent compulsory. There ean be no hardships in compulsion as is sometimes argued, provided there are reasonable safeguards, just as is provided for in Mr. Gokhale's Bill. But instead of wasting time over endless discussions as to the details of the working of the Bill, I think that a beginning should be made as easily as possible. With the inauguration of a system of free primary education, I can look forward to an era of prosperity and progress for the inarticulate masses whose interests should always be our most sacred charge.

As regards the movements for the two sister universities, I am aware that doubts have been expressed in some quarters as to their desirability under existing conditions in India. It has been said that they will retard rather than foster the growth of knowledge by perpetuating obsolete forms of learning—that they will hinder the diffusion of new and enlightened ideas, and that they will perpetuate the line of cleavage, accentuate the differences, and widen the gulf between the two communities. Now, I for one cannot seriously believe that these results can follow the establishment of any university worth the name. A temple of learning hardly deserves this honourable appellation, if, instead of diffusing the light of knowledge and culture, it leaves its votaries in Cimmerian intellectual darkness, where they are prevented from looking beyond their own immediate selves, or taking a broader view of men and affairs than what is afforded by sordid personal considerations. These apprehensions arise from an ignorance of the wealth of knowledge, culture and civilization which lies hidden in the neglected mines of Oriental learning. Nor do I believe that there cannot be any real amity between the youths of the two great communities unless they are prepared to forswear, partially at least, their own respective ideals in order to develop a hybrid nationality and meet on the common ground afforded by the diffusion of an alien culture and civilization. If such are the tremendous sacrifices that have to be made, ever for so desirable an object as a real *rapprochement* between the two communities, I for one would not purchase even so valuable a commodity at so high a price. Happily these

alarms are without foundation. For the Muslim University, I am prepared to tell these false prophets that it will be a great seat of intellectual activity, where the youths of our community, drawing their inspiration from the master-minds of Islam in the past, and taking the fullest advantage of the wealth of Islamic culture and civilization, will also be fully equipped with all the weapons of modern warfare to take their proper place in the battle of life. I am confident that if, under Providence, the university fulfils its ideals, the East and the West will be blended in our youths in perfect harmony. This is fully recognized by all the leaders of Muslim thought, and that is the secret of the tremendous enthusiasm which the movement for the university has evoked all over India.

Proposed Dacca University

While on the subject of residential universities, I feel bound to say a few words as regards the proposed university at Dacca. The announcement made by His Excellency about this new university has given rise to endless discussions, and some of our countrymen are opposing it tooth and nail. One distinguished Bengali leader calls this university 'the apple of discord', and the opponents of the scheme pretend to see in its inauguration a clever linguistic partition of the Bengalis, quite as pernicious as the late administrative Partition. Now, I am very sorry that our Bengali friends should scent danger where none exists, and oppose the scheme in a way which is sure to set the two communities against each other. The Viceroy has distinctly assured the Bengali leaders that the university would in no sense be a sectional university meant to benefit the Musalman alone. It was the remarkable strides made by East Bengal in the matter of education in recent years that suggested to His Excellency the idea of creating a teaching and residential university at Dacca—the first of its kind in India—in order to prevent a set-back in this remarkable progress. We, the Musalman of East Bengal, welcome the university, not because it is meant for our exclusive benefit or to injure the interests of our Hindu brethren, but because we feel convinced that a teaching and residential university, in an area which has shown itself so susceptible of educational improvement, would give an impulse to the cause

of education in the Eastern Bengal districts, which would easily place them in the van of educational progress in India. No doubt, and benefit to East Bengal necessarily means a benefit to that section of the population, numbering 20 millions, who happen to be Musalman, but this is a contingency which cannot be avoided. We cannot cease to be a part and parcel of the population of that part of the country simply to please the fancy of a set of politicians who would eternally penalize the whole of Eastern Bengal for the sin of having harboured so large a Musalman majority. But while we welcome the scheme of the university and the appointment of a special officer, I am strongly of opinion that the Musalman community would not derive any appreciable benefits, unless sufficient funds are allowed for the exclusive advancement of Musalman education. Ours is a proverbially poor community, and the leaders of the Hindu Deputation, as well as the Viceroy, have admitted that it will be necessary to give special facilities to Musalmans. With sufficient funds at our disposal, it will only remain to work out matters of detail as to how our community in East Bengal can best be helped to take the fullest advantage of a residential and teaching university in their midst.

Need for Musalman Teachers and Inspectors

And this leads me to say a few words on a subject which, I am afraid, has not received the attention it deserves, and which must be well borne in mind if our efforts for the advancement of Musalman education are expected to meet with practical success. I refer to the urgent necessity of having a larger number, than hitherto, of Musalman teachers in the schools situated in areas where Musalmans preponderate in the population, and also of having more Musalman inspecting officers to supervise Musalman education. It has been the fashion to denounce the apathy of the Musalmans in taking advantage of the facilities afforded by the educational instructions of the country, and there is no doubt that the accusation is partially well-founded. But there are other causes which have conspired to keep away the Musalmans from our English schools and colleges. These instituti ns have all along been condemned for

the godless education they impart, and to the large majority of Mohammedan parents these seminaries of learning are so many devil's workshops where the minds of youth are filled with ideas repugnant to the tenets of Islam. There is hardly anything either in the curriculum of studies or in the personnel of the institutions, which can inspire Musalman parents with confidence as to the spiritual upbringing of the students. "Is it any object for wonder", says Mr. E.C. Bayley, "that they (Musalmans) hold aloof from a system which, however good in itself, made no concession to their prejudices—made, in fact, no provision for what they esteemed their necessities, and which was in its nature unfavourably antagonistic to their interests and at variance with their social traditions?" "The language of our Government schools", says Sir William Hunter, "in Lower Bengal is Hindi and the masters are Hindus. The Musalmans with one consent spurned the instructions of idolators through the medium of idolatry......the astute Hindu has covered the country with schools adapted to the wants of his own community, but wholly unsuited to the Mohammedans. Our rural schools seldom enable a Mohammedan to learn the tongue necessary for his holding a respectable position in life and for the performance of his religious duties." No condemnation can be more vigorous or more complete, and no words more deserving of careful consideration. Some good has no doubt been done in recent years by the acceptance of some of the recommendations of the Education Commission of 1882, and the appointment of a larger number of Musalman inspecting officers in certain areas has been amply justified by events. In some instances, the advance made by the Musalmans, under the fostering care of Musalman inspecting officers in matters of education, has been phenomenal. But although much has been done, much more yet remains to be done, and I sincerely hope that Government will be induced to give fuller effect to the recommendations at an early date.

Technical and Industrial Education

On the subject of technical, industrial and commercial education for our young men, I do not think I need say much. All

the great leaders of Indian thought consider it essential to the real progress of the country for our young men to devote their energies to the development of the resources of our country and the improvement of our arts and industries. It is time that our young men should avoid the beaten track of qualifying themselves solely for service or the overstocked professions; and I am sure if they did so, they would not only benefit themselves, but serve the best interests of the country.

Communal Representation

With the broadening of outlook and the advancement of ideas consequent on the diffusion of education on Western lines, comes a natural craving for Western institutions and an eager desire to be associated more liberally in the administration of the country. The unerring signs of the times could hardly have escaped the notice of our rulers, and to their credit be it said that they have nobly come forward to meet the demands of our countrymen in both respects. It is now within the reasonable ambition of any properly qualified Indian to be admitted to the highest posts in the service of the Crown, and the expansion of the Legislative Councils and the generous recognition of a liberal representation of popular rights have secured the people of Indians an effective voice in the administration of affairs of the country. And in doing this, our rulers have been careful at each step to recognize that it is the duty of the British administration to protect the interests of the various communities in India and to secure impartial treatment to all. In the peculiar circumstances prevailing in this country, with its vast congeries of peoples in all stages of intellectual development, each with its own traditions, ideals and aspirations, it would have been suicidal to the peace and harmonious progress of the the country if Western institutions had been bodily transplanted to India without due regard to local conditions or the interests of the various communities inhabiting this peninsula. It would have been opposed to the sense of justice of the great British public, and they have not done it.

An this leads me at once to say a few words as regards the principle of communal representation and the system of sepa-

rate electorates claimed by the Musalmans in India. This has been opposed by the other communities on the ground "that separate election by castes and creeds is not known elsewhere in the British Empire, and would introduce a new element of discord and disunion if introduced in India." Now, as regards the first objection, I consider it a sufficient refutation to say that the analogy of what prevails elsewhere is not applicable to India, simply because Indian conditions are so essentially different from the state of things in other parts of the British Empire. This is no doubt a truism, but these simple and obvious reasons are so often forgotten in the heat of controversy that it is worthwhile emphasizing them. India must be judged as it is, and not from visionary theories of what it should be or by false analogies drawn from conditions different from our own. Moreover, the system of representation by caste, classes or creeds is not entirely unknown elsewhere, and it does actually prevail where the conditions are fairly similar to those in India. In moving the second reading of the Indian Council Bill in the House of Lords on Feburary 23, 1908, the Secretary of State said ; "The Mohammedans demand...the election of their own representative to these Councils in all the stages, just as in Cyprus, where, I think, the Mohamdans vote by themselves. So in Bohemia, where the Germans vote alone and have their own register. Therefore, we are not without a parallel for the idea of a separate register."

The Royal Commission on Decentralization in India, composed of European and Hindu members, strongly supported communal representation. "We are in entire accord", says the report of Decentralization Commission, "with Lord Ripon's resolution of 1882 as to the desirability of trying the methods of proportional representation and election by caste, occupation, etc. Having regard to the very different circumstances of different areas, we think it essential that the system adopted in each should be such as to provide for the due representation of different communities, creeds, and interests," It may be added that a class system of representation which exists in Rangoon, and in some of the Punjab muncipalities, was found by the Royal Commission to have worked fairly satisfactorily.

All these arguments apply with equal force to the separate representation of Mohammedans on local and district boards, and municipalities. These bodies exercise great influence over the everyday life of our people. Education, sanitation and other important local affairs are entrusted in their hands, and it is necessary that the Musalmans should be allowed their full share of representation on these bodies as well. To quote again from Lord Minto's statesmanlike reply: "I agree with you that the initial rungs in the ladder of self-government are to be found in the municipal and district boards, and that it is in that direction that we must look for the gradual political education of the people." To this emphatic statement of our case, I feel, I have nothing more to add.

It will thus be seen that the privileges that we claim for our community have been repeatedly recognized by distinguished British statesmen, and pledged to us by the highest officials in unmistakable terms. I repeat my firm conviction that the fulfilment of these pledges would not only be an act of bare justice to Musalmans, but would also be productive of the utmost harmony between the two great communities by removing all chances of controversy and bitter rivalry for the possession of prizes in civil life. As a practical solution of the question, I personally think that the interests of Musalmans will be safeguarded if half the seats are reserved for them, on all self-governing bodies in all the provinces, as well as the Legislative Councils, to be filled by the system of separate electorates and voting on separate registers. To quote once again from Lord Minto: "You justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community and the service to the Empire".

Wakf

The question of the mismanagement of *Wakf* endowments has been agitating the mind of the community for sometime past, and is a matter of grave concern to the Musalmans of India. It is the duty of the Government to see that the pious wishes of these benefactors of our community are fully carried out

by a proper application of the *Wakf* funds to the purposes for which they are intended. The League has already drawn the attention of Government to this deplorable state of things, but hitherto without effect. Another source of annoyance to the community has been the indifference with which Government has treated the representations of the community as regards the dissatisfaction amongst the Musalmans of India caused by the decision of the Privy Council regarding the validity of *Wakf-alal-Aulad.* I cannot conceive how Government can persuade itself to ignore such unmistakable expressions of the opinion of the leaders of our community on questions of such supreme importance to the Musalmans of India.

Indians in the Transvaal

I feel it my bounden duty to raise an emphatic protest against the unjust treatment of Indians, and the serious disabilities imposed on them, in British South-East Africa. The perpetuation of the grievances of our countrymen in that land, in spite of the most vigorous condemnation both in this country and in England, is a marvel to those who have learnt to pin their faith on the sense of justice of the British people for the redress of real grievances. Nearly five years ago, I put a series of questions in the Imperial Council with a view to ascertain how far the Government of India was regardful of the rights and privileges of the natives of India in the Transvaal. The replies, as I noted then, were satisfactory. I am well aware that both the Governments here and in Britain are very sympathetic, and there is a tendency towards the redress of grievances. But in spite of all that has been done, a bare enumeration of the existing disabilities of the Indians in the Transvall would be shocking to the feelings of their fellow-countrymen in India. They are still denied all freedom in the acquirement of land in that country; they are not given facilities and comforts in the matter of travelling in the railways; they are debarred from nomination to the magisterial offices, however influential and respectable they may be; while suffering terms of imprisonment, little or no consideration is paid to their religious scruples, although these are often as dear to them as life itself. These

his position in life outside the Government service. But I wish it to be distinctly understood that I have no desire to make any proposals which will have the effect of impairing the efficiency of the various branches of public service. We are convinced as well as anybody else that it would be detrimental to the cause of the proper administration of the country if incompetent men are pitchforked into posts without due regard to their abilities to perform the duties assigned to them. Officials in India seem to have an idea that Musalmans press for a preferential treatment of their youths in the matter of employment in the public services, in utter disregard of the requirements of efficiency. Nothing is further from our intention than this. What we want is that, provided Musalman candidates satisfy the minimum test required for efficiency, they may be freely admitted in preference to candidates belonging to advanced communities. To insist on more than the minimum requisite of qualifications for the due discharge of the duties of a post would be to insist on what is perhaps a superfluity. There is a general impression that in matters of employment in public service, Mohammedan claims have met with indulgent consideration. I have gathered statistics of appointments in Eastern Bengal, where the principle of favouritism is alleged to have been carried very far, which shows that there are far more Hindu officers without any university qualifications than there are Mohammedans. It seems to me that if Mohammedan claims are to be fully met and real justice is to be done to them in the matter of appointments, a minimum qualification, with due regard to the pay and prospects of the various offices, should be fixed. And when a Mohammedan is found to satisfy the requisite minimum, and is otherwise qualified, he should be given preference over candidates belonging to advanced communities; and that this policy may be continued till such time as the proportion of Mohammedans in the services comes up to their proportion in the population.

Concluding Remarks

Any now I must bring my words to close. I feel I owe you ample apologies for having inflicted this long speech on you,

and I must thank you for having listened to it so patiently. I am quite aware that I have said nothing new or original, or anything particulaly nice to strike your fancy. I have said just what came uppermost in my mind regarding some burning questions of the day affecting our community in India. Master-minds have handled these subjects before me, and they have left nothing new for me to say, But even obvious truths have got to be repeated, and their importance reiterated, lest in the tumult and bustle of the modern world we lose sight of them altogether.

The East is just now the scene of strange happenings. Old barriers are being broken down, old prejudices uprooted, and everywhere we seem to be confronted with revolutions which seem likely to convulse society. We in India cannot be unaffected by all that is happening around us. New hopes and aspirations have been born within us; and the mind of educated India is now throbbing with inspiring ideals and lofty aspirations. For the Musalmans to continue further in a state of listless indifference would be to seal their fate for all time. We must all move with the times, or be forever doomed.

The question has often been asked : What should be our attitude towards politics ? The world has grown older and wiser by more than half a century since the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan advocated a total abstention from politics as the best course for a Musalman to pursue in India. Things have greatly changed since then, and the advice of even so great a leader as the late Syed has got to be modified in the light of past experiences. I think the proper answer to the question must, at the present moment, depend on what we mean by politics. There can be no harm if we confine our politics to placing our wants and grievances before our rulers, in a perfectly constitutional manner, and with due regard to the just claims of the other great communities of India. But we must deprecate the encouragement of the spirit of utter lawlessness, defiance of authority, rank sedition and reckless disregard of the rights of others, which, we find, generally form a part of the programme of the politics of the day.

To my mind, what is more urgently needed for our community than any politics is a combined effort on the part of all our leaders to spread education in all its branches amongst the various sections of our community. The facilities for education that already exist should be multiplied and extended, and all possible inducements held out to Musalman parents to secure the benefits of a liberal system of education for their children. We want men of genuine patriotism and self-sacrifice like our friend the Hon'ble Haji Mohammad Ismail Khan of Backergunj, whose munificent donation towards the cause of Mohammedan education recalls the noble and large-hearted philanthropy of Haji Mohammad Mohsin.

I have never advocated the principle of preferential treatment for the claims of my community in any respects; and what I have always claimed has been a just and proper regard of our legitimate rights. We do not wish to be selfish ourselves, and we would not tolerate selfishness in others. As regards our attitude towards all the other communities generally, I consider that man the worst enemy of the Indian peoples who would needlessly sow the seeds of discord and disunion between class and class and race and race in this country. In saying so, I am only giving expression to the earnest desire of His Majesty the King Emperor, so repeatedly emphasized by His Excellency the Viceroy, to see peace and harmony established amongst all the classes of his subjects, and I consider it almost a disloylty to act in contravention to the clearly expressed wishes of our Gracious Sovereign. To the Hindu community particularly, out attitude should be one of brotherly love and amity; and we should always be ready to extend to them our whole-hearted sympathy in all their efforts for the advancement of India. (We must not forget that by their wealth and superior culture they deservedly occupy a very prominent position amongst the leaders of Indian thought, and not infrequently have they set before us examples of fearless independence, which we should do well to follow in all that concerns our country and our community.) To our young men, I would add a few words of advice. Be manly and self-reliant, for a spirit of servile dependence on others is repugnant to the best traditions of Islam. Be

honest and truthful, in small things and great, and recollect that one of the chosen attributes of the Divinity in Islam is Truth. Be loyal, and cultivate a feeling of reverence, love and respect for the great British people to whom your country and community owe the blessings of peace and ordered government. About all, cultivate the spirit of self-sacrifice, and learn to sink your personal needs and requirements in striving after the common good, and I have no doubt you will grow up to be useful members of society, loyal and law-abiding citizens, and thus be worthy not only of your glorious heritage, but also of that great future which, under Providence, is to be sure the density of India as a part and parcel of the mighty British Empire.

Gentlemen, I must again apologize to you for having tres-passed so much on your valuable time; but before I sit down, I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to take formal leave of you and all my colleagues, with a view to retiring finally from the field of politics. I am sorry to tell you that my failing health now stands in the way of my participating further in the bustle and turmoil of an active political life; and I sincerely regret that I am no longer able to take my humble share in the service of my community and my country. For the last 12 years I have been your humble comrade-in-arms, and I hope I have always been found in the thick of the fight. When I first took the field more than a decade ago, my co-religionists were hem-med in on all sides by implacable enemies. Now, through the blessings of God, the situation is greatly changed. My co-religionsts have known (*sic*) their own rights and privileges. I feel satisfied that they can handle the weapons of warfare with pluck and courage, that they can now hold their own. Had it not been for the conviction that I cannot any longer be an active participator with you in present state of my health, I would have continued at my post undeterred by any con-sequences. When I first took up politics, I did it to place my services at the disposal of my co-religionists and without any hopes of personal aggrandisement. I can now retire with a light heart, for my co-religionists have no longer that need for my services which they did before. But although

Iretire from active service, I will be in your reserve, for you can ever command me to do all that I can for the furtherance of the interests of my community. I will always be at your beck and call, though not by your side. My consolation is that I see such a large number of our educated young men devote their time, talent and energies in the cause of Islam; and I am confident that when I unbuckle my armour, the weapons of warfare will pass on to stronger arms and stouter nerves. Believe me that in my retirement, you will have my most earnest prayers for the success of your efforts in securing Islam that place amongst the great communities of India to which it is entitled by its glorious history, noble traditions, lofty ideals and cultured civilization. May God prosper you and crown all your efforts with unqualified success.

6

A PLEA FOR UNITY, MODERATION AND SELF-RELIANCE*

When my esteemed friend Syed Wazir Hasan communicated to me the desire of your Council that I should accept the presidency of this great gathering, I regarded the high honour offered to me as a token of your appreciation of the active share which, ever since its foundation, the Punjab Muslim League has taken in the great work accomplished by our organization during a period remarkable for a series of momentous political changes and the birth of new political forces in this country. When a complete history of the organized efforts during the days of the Reform Scheme comes to be written, it will be found that the Punjab Muslim League played an important part in securing those valuable rights and privileges for our community which have, to a very great extent, enabled our co-religionists to take their proper share in the legislative and administrative machinery of the Indian Government. Writing from Switzerland on August 23, 1909, that veteran Muslim leader, the Right Hon'ble Sayed Ameer Ali—who but for the Turkish crisis would now have been presiding over this Anniversary—spoke of our work in that connection in this gratifying terms : "Let me congratulate your League upon the emphatic manner in which you have declared yourself. I have already received from English friends, who take an interest in our cause, expression of warm appreciation of your League's independence, consistency and political insight." And now by my election as President of the Sixth Anniversary of the All-India Muslim League, you have set the final seal of recognition upon the services rendered to the Muslim cause by your Punjab Branch. In return for this generous appreciation on your part, I can confidently assure

*Presidential address delivered by Mian Mohammed Shafi at the Lucknow session held on 22-23 March, 1913.

you that the 'Living Hearts of the Punjab' shall continue to beat true and steadfast as ever in the service of the national cause, that your brethren in the Punjab shall not be found wanting, no matter how great be the sacrifice which the call of duty may demand.

The Unique Importance of this Anniversary

Gentlemen, we have met to-day under circumstances which lend exceptional importance to this year's anniversary. Political events in India are marching with a lightening rapidity and, in circumstances such as these, it is absolutely essential for a progressive political institution to keep pace with the ever-changing conditions of a transitional period. The improved legislative machinery is now in full swing; and to those who have been gifted by Providence with the foresight necessary to anticipate coming events, signs are not wanting of further development in the complicated political problems with which Indian affairs are surrounded. The Indian political atmosphere is already reverberating with the distant echoes of a coming storm which, though as yet below the far horizon, is travelling steadily onward until at last it is sure to burst over our heads. The murmurs of 'Provincial Autonomy', 'Increased Power of Interpellation', 'Non-Official Majority in the Imperial Legislative Council', and the advent of the Royal Commission on the Public Services in India, are but the forerunners of that storm. It is the duty of the Muslim League to be on the alert lest the Indian Musalmans be caught napping at the critical moment.

The League itself is, this year, entering upon what may be rightly termed the second stage of its development with a revised constitution which is but the natural outcome not only of altered conditions but also of spontaneous evolution. In the Muslim world outside India, momentous events have taken place which, besides changing the maps of three continents, are bound to have a tremendous effect upon the fortunes of Islam. Indeed, the great ocean has been disturbed by a storm the consequent commotion of which will be felt far and wide on every Muslim shore. In these circumstances, an

intense feeling of responsibility almost overwhelms me when think of what I have taken upon myself in responding to your call by agreeing to preside over your deliberations. But the heavy burden of that responsibility is considerably lightened by the assurance that I may count upon your generous co-operation in rendering my task less difficult than it might otherwise be, and in giving to our discussions that vigorous and yet moderate tone which alone is worthy of so important a gathering as ours, representing the 70 millions of His Imperial Majesty's Musalman subjects in this great continent.

The Dehli Outrage

But before dealing with the important problems which I propose to discuss to-day, I desire, on behalf of the Indian Musalmans, to offer our respectful and sincere congratulations to His Excellency the Viceroy on his recovery from the effect of the injuries resulting from the dastardly outrage committed by some despicable miscreant on December 25. The universal chorus of condemnation of that inhuman act by His Imperial Majesty's Indian subjects belonging to all classes and creeds, and the remarkable display of genuine sympathy for Their Excellencies personally on that deplorable occasion, have placed it beyond even a shadow of doubt that the heart-strings of the Indian people ring absolutely true. Indeed this cold-blooded act of some follower of a most abominable cult, hitherto foreign to Eastern ideas and traditions, finds no sympathy among any class of His Majesty's faithful subjects in this country. Who could have even imagined that on such an auspicious day and in the midst of general rejoicings, this apostle of anarchism would select for his victim the central figure of a stately procession—a Viceroy—who, during the comparatively short period has been at the helm of the Indian administration, has won for himself a conspicuous place in the hearts of the Indian people by his keen solicitude for their welfare? Who could have even conceived the posibility of an outrage like this aimed at the life of one who has already done so much to satisfy that greatest of our country's immediate needs, a wider diffusion of elementary education among the Indian masses? The rercudescence of anarchism evidenced by this and other outrages, recently

committed in certain parts of the country, constitutes a most deplorable feature of the existing situation, Alas ! these misguided terrorists do not realize the infinite harm which results from their evil propaganda to the cause of peaceful progress in India. These horrible crimes, aimed against law and order, must inevitably put back the hands of the clock and retard the onward march at a period when every step forward means so much for the ultimate regeneration of our people. It is the boundcn duty of all law-abiding citizens not only to assist the authorities in the detection of the perpetrators of these horrid crimes but also to make an earnest and well-organized effort to stamp out this fell disease which, if unchecked, is sure to eat into the very vitals of the Indian community. Thus alone will this hideous blot upon the fair name of our motherland be obliterated : thus alone will our people advance peacefully along the path that leads to those glorious heights whereon India shall occupy, within the Empire of Greater Britain, that eminent position to which she may legitimately aspire.

Genesis of the Constitution

The rapid pace with which nations all over the world are advancing in the race for intellectual progress and political emancipation is absolutely unparalleled in the past history of mankind. The increasing spread of socialistic doctrines in the West and the growing influence of constitutional ideals in the East are producing a succession of political changes bewildering to the thoughtful student of world politics. In India itself, hardly had the first Reformed Councils settled down to business, not having completed even the second year of their infantine existence, when the memorable visit of our august Sovereign brought in its wake far-reaching administrative changes; unsetteling 'settled fact', and awoke in the patriotic mind dreams of further constitutional reforms foreshadowed in the now famous Despatch of the Government of India. The All-India Muslim League, being an essentially progressive political institution, could no longer rest content with the Pre-Reform Constitution which had been the basis of its operations ever since its foundation in December 1906. And yet practical statesman-

ship required that the necessary revision of the League's Constitution should be carried out on lines which, while assimilating its policy and practice to the altered political conditions, would constitute but the next stage in the process of a natural and spontaneous evolution without, in any way, creating a wide break with the past. With this end in view and after certain preliminary discussions in Calcutta on the occasion of the last Anniversary of the League, my friend Syed Wazir Husan issued, in April 1912, a circular letter to all the Provincial Leagues calling for suggestions in connection with the proposed revision; and, finally, having prepared the amended objects and rules, placed them before the meetings of the Council held at Bankipur last December 31 under the presidency of our princely leader, His Highness the Aga Khan. The proposed constitution thus prepared and adopted by the Council, with certain modifications, will be placed befere you by our able energetie Secretary, whose valuable work in connection with this all-important matter is deserving of special recognition. For my own part I have, after giving it my most careful and anxious consideration, no hesitation in declaring that the revised Constitution complies with the two fundamental tests mentioned by me, and have great pleasure in commending it to your approval. The aims and methods laid down therein, while perfectly consonant with those salutary principles which constitute the quintessence of real statesmanship, are fully adapted to the existing political conditions and constitute a natural step forward in the progressive development of the All-India Muslim League. A comparison of the aims and objects of our organization, as embodied in its existing Constitution, with those now proposed will make the correctness of this statement absolutely clear.

Objects of the League

According to the revised Constitution, the first object of the League is "to maintain and promote among the people of this country feelings of loyalty towards the British Crown'. The substitutions of the words 'the people of this country' in place of

Musalmans' and 'British Crown' in place of 'British Government' constitutes a distinct improvement which, I have no doubt, you will unhesitatingly accept. The traditional loyalty of the Indian Musalmans to the Empire, under the banner of which we live in peace and prosperity does not need to be proclaimed with a flourish of trumpets; nor is it one of those monopolies the successful possession of which depends upon extensive advertisement. The solid foundation of our loyalty rests not upon its profession, but upon deeds the incontrovertible proof which is writ large upon the pages of history. And the substitution of the words 'Britsh Crown' in place of 'British Government' in relation to our devotion to the Empire of which India is component part constitutes a more dignified and faithful expression of our real feelings. The ever-changing succeession of political phenomena due to the prevalence of the party system of Government in England makes it difficult for one to regard the 'Britlsh Government' as the unchanging symbol of Imperialism. The Government is now Liberal : to-morrow it may be Unionist. Do the Unionists acknowledge loyalty to the Liberal Government now in power ? Would the Liberals admit loyalty to the Unionist Government if, instead of occupying the Treasury Benches as they now do, they were driven into the opposition ? And the recent illiberal policy of the Liberal Government towards Muslim States has but confirmed me in the distrust, which I have always entertained, of the high-sounding principles liberalism loudly proclaimed but seldom acted upon by its apostles. Be that as it may, the Government in Great Britain or, in other words, the 'British Government' denotes change, while our loyalty to the Empire is unchanging and unchangeable. It is the British Crown alone which is the permanent and ever-abiding symbol of Empire. It is not to this Government or to that we acknowledge allegiance : it is to the British Crown itself that we owe unswerving and abiding loyalty.

But what, you will ask, is my conception of loyalty to the British Crown ? In my humble judgment, it is the paramount duty of every loyal subject of the King Emperor to abstain from doing anything calculated to impair the permanence and

stability of British rule in India. And as happiness and contentment of the people is the only bed-rock upon which that permanence and stability can be securely built, I regard it as the duty of all loyalists to assist the Government in all measures undertaken to bring about that happiness and contentment by representing, faithfully and fearlessly, the real needs and feelings of the people. The British Government in India suffers from disabilities natural to the position of a Western Government in the midst of an Oriental people. And these disabilities are unfortunately not lessened by the policy of social aloofness adopted by a large section of European officialdom in this country. It is, therefore, incumbent upon those who pose as the spokesmen of Indian public opinion to represent the real needs and wishes of the people with that scrupulous honesty which alone is worthy of honourable men and of sincere well-wishers of the Government and the country. And, as it may occasionally happen, if the Government is about to launch an administrative or a legislative measure deterimental to the best interest of the Government and the people, it is the bounden duty of a loyal citizen to warn it of the consequences of its mistaken policy. The man who, knowing that the contemplated action is not suited to the circumstances of the country, or will give rise to legitimate disatisfaction among the people, intentionally and for his own selfish ends, misrepresent the situation to the authorities is a traitor to the loyal cause.

Speaking of Muslim loyalty at the anniversary of the Punjab Muslim League on October 22, 1909, I said : "We know that the authorities in India as well as in England have, in the past, committed errors of policy and even blunders in their administration of the affairs of this country, and we recognize that they are liable to commit such errors and blunders again. And if, in its watchfulness of the best interests of the rulers and the ruled, the Muslim League finds the Government about to commit what in its judgment is an error, it will be the first to give warning to the authorities and, if necessary, even to enter to respectful protest against the contemplated action." This, gentlemen, is and has always been my conception of loyalty to

the world-wide Empire, the citizenship of which is one of our proudest possessions.

Protection and Advancement of Muslim Rights and Interests

Passing on to the second object as embodied in the revised Constitution, the League has undertaken, as one of its principal tasks, the protection and advancement of the political and other rights of Indian Musalmans. Mere verbal modifications apart, the object herein described is one of those we have had in view from the very inception of our organization. Any this undoubtedly is as it should be. Under the existing political conditions in India, it is perfectly natural for the Muslim community to aspire to its legitimate share in the legislative and administrative machinery of the country, and for its representative organization to take active steps for the protection and advancement of the community's rights and interests. Nevertheless, this naturally distinctive feature of the League's activities, and more particularly the part it has played in securing the right of separate representation for Indian Musalmans, has not only furnished a certain class of politicians an opportunity for intentional misrepresentation of our aims, but has also created an entire misapprehension of our position in the minds of certain well-intentioned students of Indian politics. We have been branded as separatists : we have been charged with the evil intention of seeking to erect a permanent iron wall between the various Indian communities ! I propose to-day to notice but one instance of each of these two absolutely untenable positions taken up by our critics.

Only a few months ago, the president of a provincial conference, held in the Imperial City of Delhi, while speaking of the Muslim attitute in relation to Indian politics, stated that "The separatist policy is in the ascendency (*siç*) at present, and our Mohammedan brethren regard themselves as 'exiles' in India which, like the Anglo-Indians, they are pleased to call 'the land of regrets'." The mischievous insinuation contained in these words was obviously intended for that portion of the gallery to whom the word 'Pan-Islamism' is like the proverbial red rag,

and is too contemptible to need any rejoinder on our part. This is particularly so when we remember that the insinuation came from one whose political creed, to quote from another part of his address, is summed up in the following remarkable sentence : "All measures that satisfy the end are justifiable and all else that abstruct the path are to be removed." Fortunately for our country, this Jesuistic policy finds no support among the majority of our enlightened Hindu brethren and, in consequence, may be put aside as unworthy of further notice.

Let's turn to a typical instance of those well-intentioned people who, because of a superficial knowledge of the Indian political conditions, have entirely misunderstood our position. In his book, *The Awakening of India*, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald conceived that the life of Indian Musalmans is 'centered round a shrine, not round a political capital", that in India they are "a community only". The opinion thus expressed is based upon such absolute and utter misapprehension of the Muslim position in India that I deem it essential to disabuse the mind not only of our distinguished visitor, but also of those who, whether in England or in India, may entertain similar views.

The Muslim Position in India

The heterogeneous mass of the Indian population consists of a number of communities which, with the expansion of modern education and culture, are coming more and more under the unifying influences of an increasing community of interests. But in a large continent like India, with a population of over 300 million, this process of unification must, in the very nature of things, be gradual. Meanwhile, the religious, historical and social traditions and ideals which influence the communal lives of the various groups have produced complicated results which find no parellel in any other country in the world. There are the descendants of the pre-Aryan aborigines of India, including what are called the 'Depressed Classes', who have, for thousands of years occupied a position of subservience and, in consequence, are possessed of very little political vitality. Next comes the great Hindu community, descendants of Aryan conquerors of old, whose faculty of adaptability to changing circumstances is

of an amount of irritation in the highest degree detrimental to the cause of inter-communal co-operation. The removal of this periodically recurring cause of friction will itself be a powerful agency for the evolution of a common Indian nationality. And, when satisfied by their respective representation in the various stages of self-government, communities will have learnt to work together in complete harmony, other unifying forces coming into operation will hasten the advent of that happy period when, under altered conditions productive of mutual confidence, separate electorates may no longer be necessary. Replying to the Address presented to him at Lahore by the Punjab Muslim League on April 1, 1911, His Excellency Lord Hardinge confirmed the pledges given by Lords Morley and Minto to Indian Musalmans in the following words : "I have listened with pleasure to your appreciation of the Scheme of Reforms so recently introduced and note your quickness to appreciate the confirmation by my Government in the Legislative Council of the pledges that have been given to you. You may rest assured that pledges once given by Government will not be broken. Whether or when you may yourself come forward to say that you no longer require the privilege of separate representation, I cannot say—but if such a day comes, it will be evidence of a spirit of mutual toleration and enlightened progress which could not but be a happy augury for the peace and welfare of your motherland." The statesman-like pronouncement made by His Excellency in these words, breathing assurance for the present and hope for the future, furnishes an object-lesson not only for the Indian Musalmans but for our non-Muslim brethren as well. The acceleration of the happy period foreshadowed in these prophetic words rests mainly in the hands of the ardent advocates of mxed electorates themselves. And, on behalf of my community, I can sefely declare that when the dawn of the evolution of a common Indian nationality is in sight, when the perfect mutual goodwill and confidence alluded to by Lord Hardinge has become an accomplished fact, the Musalman community shall not be found wanting in their earnest endeavour to assist in the conversion of the dim light of the early morning into the dazzling brightness of the mid-day sun. Until the advent of that happy day alone shall we hold the Govern-

ment to the pledges given to us—releasing it from their continued fulfilment when, under the aegis of the British Crown, the evolution of a common Indian nationality is in sight.

Inter-Communal Union

The spirit in which in the Muslim League seeks to promote Musalman interests is clear from the third Object, as revised, which, in its essentials, is but a verbatim reproduction of one of the three aims embodied in the existing Constitution. For sometime after the advent of British rule in this country, Indian Musalmans, owing to circumstances partly beyond their control, lagged behind the other communities in the race for intellectual progress. And when, under the inspiring guidance of their great leader, the late Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan, they at last awoke to the needs of the time, it was but natural that they should, at first, concentrate their attention and energies upon the acquisition of modern education. It was towards the end of 1905 that they turned their active attention to politics; and the force of circumstances, during the first few years of their political awakening, compelled them to devote the greater part of their energies to the protection of their communal interests. That necessary foundation having now been laid, the Council of the League has acted wisely in proposing the removal of the qualifying words prefixed to the corresponding Object as laid down in the old Constitution and in giving it a distinct place by itself, thus emphasizing the League's intention of paying greater attention to the problem of inter-communal union and co-operation in the second stage of its development. Not only do the strained relations existing between the Hindu and Mohammedan communities, particularly in upper India, retard the peaceful progress of the country and result in infinite harm to the communities themselves, but they, at the same time, create for the Government administrative and other difficulties by no means easy of solution. All sincere well-wishers of the country are united in deploring this most unfortunate state of things and, of late, signs have not been wanting of a genuine desire, on the part of the leaders on both sides, to face this problem in real earnestness. In my humble judgment, the time for loud profes-

sions and even emphatic declarations is over : every day which passes without definite action is a day lost to the sacred cause of Indian nationality (*sic*). Are we to continue to wait until unanimity of views all along the line has been reached ? Are we to go on being at arm's length even where we can co-operate simply because in other matters we are, at present, unable to see eye to eye ? Does not human experience show that partial co-operation is often the most effective instrument in bridging over the gulf in its entirety ? If this is so, why wait until absolute agreement in respect of every point of difference is attained ?

A Practical Proposal for Joint Action

There are a number of matters of the utmost importance, affecting the vital interests of the motherland, with reference to which we are already in complete agreement : there are a number of grave problems a speedy and effective solution of which depends mainly on our united action. Let us take them into our hands at once and make an earnest and well-organized effort to grapple with them. And when once we have tasted the life-giving pleasures of mutual co-operation for the good of our country, by reaping the luscious fruits of our united labour, mutual confidence and goodwill resulting therefrom will bring about complete harmony of feeling and unanimity of views even as regards matters upon which there is, at present, divergence of opinion among us. Practical steps towards the evolution of a common Indian nationality, the establishment of conciliation boards and mixed social clubs, extended employment of Indians in the higher grades of the Public Services, separation of executive and judicial branches, a wide diffusion of free elementary education among the Indian masses, improvement of sanitation, particularly in rural areas, increased prosperity of indigenous industries and fiscal reform connected therewith, abolition of frequent recurrence of land revenue settlements, treatment of Indians in the British Colonies, grant of Executive Councils and High Courts to the provinces which are still without these institutions, constitute a long enough catalogue of national problems of the highest moment upon which we can all set to work

together. Do these important questions not call for immediate co-operation on the part of all true sons of the soil ? Do these momentous problems not furnish a sufficient common basis for united action by the various Indian communities ? Let us, then, at once start a 'United India League' open to all classes and creeds, with provincial and district branches, and thus organize the whole country for the great and glorious work connected with this chain of vital problems. With all the earnestness I can command, I appeal to the leaders of all communities to give serious consideration to this practical proposal and to join hands in giving definite shape to a scheme which I, for one, sincerely believe will not only be fruitful in immense good to our country, but will, at the same time, hasten the evolution of a common Indian nationality.

The Ultimate Goal

At the time of the foundation of the All-India Muslim League in December, 1906, it was to begin with, considered sufficient to lay down the basic principles of the League's policy without attempting to formulate definitely the final end to be kept in view. The course then adopted was, I venture to think, perfectly consonant with principles of practical statesmanship. For a communal organization like the Muslim League, launching into the stormy ocean of Indian politics at a time when momentous constitutional changes were in contemplation, to have laid down, on the day of its birth, definitely and once for all, the ultimate goal of its future activities would have been well-nigh suicidal. But full six years have passed since then—years of stress and strife—during which a great deal of experience has been gained, all important political problems have been discussed on the occasion of the various anniversaries, and a considerable amount of work has been successfully accomplished. Moreover, many undercurrents of the Indian political ocean have now risen to the surface, enabling us to form a more or less correct judgment about the future.

Your Council, therefore, felt that the time had arrived when, to the three objects embodying the basic principles of our policy,

we could safely add a fourth, laying down the ultimate goal which the League ought to have in view. And in arriving at a correct decision concerning this all-important question, the Council had to bear in mind not only the three basic principles of the League's policy, but also the past traditions of the Indian Musalman community, the various pronouncements made by those who have hitherto guided its political activities, and the principles underlying the various resolutions passed by it from time to time. After a careful analysis of the Indian political situation and of the trend of political events in the country, the Council has proposed "the attainment, under the aegis of the British Crown, of a system of self-government suitable to India" as the final goal towards which our activities ought to be directed. The announcement of this proposal has caused a shaking of heads, curiously enough, in two opposite camps. While, on the one hand, a section of the forward school is of opinion that we are not aiming high enough, on the other hand, some of the more cautious, in India as well as in England, have raised their eyebrows as if we are about to advance at a pace too rapid for our safety. The very fact that two such diametrically opposite criticisms have been advanced against the course we propose to adopt is, to my mind, conclusive proof of its soundness. It is my deliberate judgment that the fourth object as suggested by the Council is based upon perfectly sound principles and fully satisfies the two great tests of moderation and political foresight. The adoption of the alternative proposal put forward by some of our friends that the League should set up a 'colonial form of government in India' as its ultimate goal is, in my opinion, inadmissible as well as politically unsound. The political conditions, internal and external, prevailing in the British Colonies have no analogy whatsoever with those obtaining in India and I am in entire accord with my friend, the Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah, in thinking that the adoption of any course other than the one proposed by the Council would be absolutely unwise. Moreover, for a political organization in a country circumstanced as India is, and more particularly when passing through a transitional period, the adoption of a definite form of government as the ultimate goal of its ambitions is opposed to principles of practical statesmanship. Dis-

cussing this very question at the second anniversary of the Punjab Muslim League over three years ago, I ventured to emphasize the impossibility, on our part, of fixing 'Colonial *Swaraj*' as the final goal of our political activities, and expressed it as my definite opinion that "a reasonable measure of self-government with due regard to the rights and interests of the various communities inhabiting the Indian continent" was the end we ought to keep in view It will thus be seen that the decision arrived at by the Council is in perfect harmony with the view I have always entertained concerning this important problem; and I have, in consequence, very great pleasure indeed in recommending its unanimous adoption by this representative gathering.

The Public Service Commission

The extended employment of His Majesty's Indian subjects in the higher grades of the Public Services is undoubtedly one of the best trainings for self-government, under the aegis of the British Crown, which the people of this country can obtain. The Public Service Commission of 1886-87 and its Report concerning this important administrative problem are now ancient history. Meanwhile, the various provinces of India have, under the peaceful conditions brought into existence by British Rule, forged ahead in the race for material and intellectual progress. The results, on the general prosperity of the country as well as upon the awakening of new aspirations and ideals among the Indian people, have inded been remarkable. The time has now arrived for a thorough overhauling of the administrative machinery of the Indian Empire and for a careful consideration of the legitimate claims of the people of this country to their due share in the higher branches of the Public Service. The Royal Commission on the Public Service in India, therefore, comes at a psychological moment, and we, the Indian Musalmans, join with the rest of our countrymen in voicing our deep satisfaction on its appointment, and in expressing a hope that the inquiry now going on will result not only in bringing the administrative machinery uptodate, but also in the due balancing of the European and Indian elements in the Service. On behalf of the All-

India Muslim League, I venture to offer our cordial welcome to Lord Islington and his colleagues, and to express a sincere hope that, in weighing the relative claims of the various interests in connection with the responsible task undertaken by them, they will bear in mind the fact that there is nothing better calculated to strengthen the political connection between England and India, nothing which can, in a higher degree, further the cause of the permanence and stability of British rule in this country than the happiness and contentment of the people resulting from the satisfaction of their legitimate claims and aspirations.

Avoiding a detailed reference to the questions which form the subject of enquiry, and without entering into a discussion of the points with regard to which there is room for honest difference of opinion, there are a few important matters of principle in connection with which I venture to offer a few observations. A careful study of public opinion in this country makes it abundantly clear that there is, at present, a practical unanimity among the educated section of the Indian population concerning the method of recruitment for the Indian Civil Service. I believe I am voicing your unanimous opinion when I say that the time has now arrived when a fair share of the vacancies in that Service should be filled by recruitment in India. We are, I think, further agreed that such recruitment should be made partly by means of promotion from the Provincial Civil Service and partly by a competitive examination held in this country. We are, I venture to affirm, also agreed that in selecting officers of the Provincial Civil Service for promotion to posts ordinarily held by members of the Indian Civil Service regard must be had to personal merit, provincial claims and communal representation. As regards the nature of the competitive examination to be held in India—whether it should be what is called a simultaneous examination or a separate examination, and if the latter, whether it should be an open competitive examination or in the nature of a competition between selected candidates—I do not propose to anticipate to-day the evidence which I have to give before the Royal Commission.

There is, further, a practical unanimity of opinion among us

that the complete separation of the executive and judicial branches of both the Indian and the Provincial Civil Services is a much-needed reform which ought no longer to be delayed. The All India Muslim League has, on more than one occasion, already expressed itself in clear and emphatic terms with reference to this important question. I venture to assure Lord Islington and his colleagues that the carrying out of this necessary reform alone will inspire the Indian Public with the complete confidence in the administration of justice which is absolutely essential in the interests alike of the Government and the country. It is, further, in the highest degree essential that the judicial branch of the two Services should be strengthened by devising a system of special training for officers of that branch, and by appointing selected members of the Bar to these appointments in larger number than has been the case hitherto. These are matters of principle to which I desire, on your behalf, to invite the attention of the Royal Commission and to assure them that a right solution of these vital problems will prove an effective means of removing the dissatisfaction which undoubtedly does exist among a considerable section of the educated classes in this country with reference to the existing conditions in the Indian and Provincial Civil Services.

The Muslim World Outside India

From a discussion of our country's internal affairs I now pass on to a review of recent occurrences in the Muslim world outside India. At the time of last anniversary, the world was witnessing a heroic struggle on the part of a devoted band of undisciplined Arabs in Tripoli against the combined naval and military forces of a civilized European Power. On a pretext, absolutely unjustifiable by the rules of international law, the Italian armies had invaded Tripoli and had, under the shelter of a powerful navy, taken possession of a narrow strip of the northern coast of that Turkish province. Such was the wonderful resistance offered by the handful of Turkish regulars and their Arab allies that the Italian cannonade from naval and land batteries, the bursting of shells dropped from aeroplanes and the bayonet charges of a highly trained infantry, could produce no appreciable effect upon the

desert warriors' heroic defence of their hearths and homes. The Great Powers of Europe took no steps to stop this unwarrantable aggression by a civilized Power, save in preventing the Turco-Italian war from being waged upon European soil. But this very limitation of the theatre of war proved the bane of Turkey. Lulled by a false sense of security as regards their European possessions, the Turkish leaders did not concentrate their attention and energies upon measures calculated to safeguard the Empire against approaching dangers. Suddenly the war-clouds gathered along the northern and western frontiers of European Turkey. The Balkan Confederacy demanded certain reforms in Albania and Macedonia almost at the point of the bayonet. The Great Powers of Europe joined their heads together and, with a view to preventing an out-break of hosilities in the Near East, entered into an exchange of views in order to take the question of reforms in the two Turkish provinces into their own hands. But the petty Balkan States were evidently too clever for the great statesmen of Europe ! Twenty-four hours before the Despatch of the Powers note to the Porte, the Balkan Confederacy sent their ultimatum; and soon after, the petty State of Motenegro declared war Turkey. In vain did the Turkish ministers, and even the Sultan himself, appeal to the Great Powers to prevent the outbreak of this unrighteous war upon a pretext absolutely contrary to international law. What reply, one may ask, would the United States of America receive if, at the instance of the American Irish Party, the Government of that country were to serve England with an ultimatum demanding autonomy for Ireland ? What would be the answer of Russia if Germany were to demand home rule for Poland at the point of bayonet ? This utterly unjustifiable action of the Balkan States was followed by the inevitable conflagration in the Near East which has brought untold misery to millions of people on both sides. The Great Powers of Europe, outwitted by the Balkan statesmen, did not move even their little finger to stem the flood. They rested content with the declaration that, whatever the result, a disturbance in the territorial status quo would not be permitted. Entangled in a disastrous war at home, the Porte was compelled

to abandon the Tripolitan Arabs to their fate. Being really unprepared for the sudden invasion of their territory all along the land frontiers, the Turks lost battle after batttle in quick succession until the Balkan armies were effectually checked in front of the famous Schatalja lines. The bands of heroes in Adrianople, Skutari and a few other places held out against fearful odds and, by their stubborn defence, vindicated the honour of the Turkish race. The victories of the Balkan States were acclaimed by some of the European races as triumphs of the Cross over the Crescent. Even the Liberal Prime Minister of the greatest Muslim Power in the world, regardless of the feelings of 100 millions of His Majesty's Musalman subjects, rejoiced at the fall of Salonica on the grounds of its having been the gate through which Christianity had entered Europe. The inhuman and unspeakable atrocities upon innocent non-combatants of both sexes were excused by our Foreign Secretary on extraordinary ground that they had been committed by irregular bands ! For the first time in modern history, a section of the European press openly proclaimed the startling doctrine that the Turks had no right to remain in Europe, as if the Eastern races of Russia and the Balkan States had a greater claim to European territory than the Turks owing to difference in religious belief ! Then commenced negotiations for peace in the great metropolis of the British Empire and upon the European political stage was enacted a farce unparalleled in modern history. The Balkan States demanded, as a part of the conditions of peace, not only the territories actually conquered by them, but even cities and islands which, as yet, they had not succeeded in capturing. And in this extraordinary demand they were supported by the Great Powers of Europe ! The former declarations of European chancelleries were thrown to the wind because, it was said, the victors could not be robbed of the fruit of their victories, and accomplished facts could not be ignored. Glancing backwards over a hundred years, is there a single European war in which the conquering nation has ever retained the whole of the conquered territory ? What was the result of the great war between Napolean, on the one hand, and England and Germany on the other ? Did Germany keep

the entire fruits of her victory over France ? Was Turkey allowed to retain those parts of the Greek Kingdom which the victorious Turkish armies overran only a few years ago ? Unbiased students of international law were surprised at the extraordinary character of these negotiations for peace, and wondered if in this enlightened age, the old adage, 'might is right', was to be substituted for the equitable doctrines laid down by great jurists and writers on the laws of nations ! Indeed the history of the Balkan War furnishes us with ample proof of the correctness of what the London correspondents of the *Civil and Military Gazette* has said in his weekly letter published in the issue of March 11, 1913. "I venture to think", says he, "that the usages of war are designed for the entertainment of philanthropists during the periods of peace. Military nations educated on Bernardi principles will find all operations justifiable if they are calculated to have the effect of crushing the enemy."

To this unvarnished statement of fact, I do not propose to add anything except a few words concerning the policy pursued by the Liberal Cabinet in England, not only regarding affairs in the Near East, but also in some parts of the Asiatic continent. Fully conscious of the heavy reponsibility which rests upon my shoulders as the President of this great gathering, and as a sincere well-wisher of England, I desire to state what, in my humble judgment, has been the net result of the foreign policy pursued by Sir Edward Grey. Is the British position in the Mediterranean Sea—that highway to India the safety of which is so absolutely essential to the permanence and stability of the British Empire in the East—as strong at present as it was when the Liberal Party came into power ? A member of the Triple Alliance has been allowed to take possession of a considerable length of the northern coast of Africa, formerly in the hands of a friendly Muslim state, and thus obtain complete sway over the two opposite shores of the Mediterranean. If the nightmare of German occupation was disturbing Sir Edward Grey's mental equilibrium, surely British diplomacy could devise a safe way of averting the danger of German usurpation. In the Near East—the glorious memories of the Crimean War and of the famous

Charge of Light Brigade absolutely forgotten—the Slav races have been allowed to gain the upper hand, and may some day become a serious menace to British interests in the eastern corner of the Mediterranean. In the pursuit of his anti-German policy and regardless of ultimate consequences, Sir Edward Grey has been throwing himself into the arms of Russia. And the results of this policy have, to my mind, been far more serious than what our Liberal statesmen seem to imagine. Russia has succeeded in obtaining practical control of northern Persia, will soon have mastery over Mongolia, and those who have been gifted with political foresight can already notice signs of Russian intrigues in Tibet. Her path to the sea being effectually blocked by Japan in the East, the Russian advance to the South is slowly but steadily progressing onward; and if Sir Edward Grey remains the arbiter of British foreign policy for long, the Muslim states in Asia will ultimately be swallowed up by the Russian Empire to the detriment, not only of Islam, but also of the British Empire in the East.

This rapid succession of disastrous events in the Muslim world has very naturally produced a profound effect on Muslim opinion and sentiment in India. Our sympathy has gone out, spontaneously and unstintedly, to our suffering brethren in the Near East and the north of Persia. I have nothing but unqualified praise for the great monetary sacrifices which our brethren in this country have willingly incurred in order to afford relief to the Turkish sufferers: I fully share with them the deep sorrow with which our hearts are filled at the unmerited troubles and afflictions which an unwarranted aggression has brought upon the brave Turkish race. The Indian Muslim world rightly regards the organized action of certain European powers to extirpate Turkish rule from European soil as absolutely unworthy of a civilized age, and does not and cannot subscribe to the curious doctrine that Turkey must, in future, be content to remain a purely Asiatic Power. Indeed, Muslim feeling in this country has been deeply stirred by the chain of extraordinary events which have taken place in Tripoli, Persia and Turkey. Fortunately for Muslim interests at this critical juncture, there is, at the helm of the Indian administration, a far-

sighted statesman who has felt the pulse of Muslim feeling with a precision which has won him our sincere respect and admiration. The active sympathy shown by Lord Hardinge and his noble Consort for our suffering Turkish brethren, the lead taken by Their Excellencies in collecting subscriptions for the relief of the wounded and the distressed in this unrighteous war and the wise pronouncements made by His Excellency, from time to time, have gained for him the deep gratitude of 70 millions of His Majesty's Musalman subjects in India. On your behalf, I venture earnestly to appeal to His Excellency to warn the Liberal Cabinet of the consequences of the mistaken policy which they have hitherto pursued and to bring home to them the conviction that, in allowing a free hand to the Czars of Russia and Bulgaria, our Government is committing a political blunder of the greatest magnitude, the ultimate consequences of which are bound to be highly detrimental to British interests in the East.

Lessons of the Turkish Crisis

Gloomy though the outlook in the Muslim world abroad is, there is one question connected therewith which merits our consideration. What are the lessons which the people of this country in general and the Musalman community in particular ought to take to their hearts from these sad occurrences ? Had the Turkish leaders, instead of being engaged in internecine strife, been united in putting their own house in order, would the results not have been entirely different ? Is this very curse of disunion not eating into the vitals of our own community in India ? The quarrels between various religious sects and the wrangling which is going on between the spokesmen of various political schools are, indeed, heart-breaking. Those who are wasting their intellectual gifts in active criticism of Muslim workers who have the misfortune to differ with them in their methods of action should remember that constructive work, not destructive criticism, is the greatest need of the community in this transitional period. There are a hundred and one urgent communal needs crying aloud for united action on the part of

those who are inspired with genuine enthusiasm for the national cause. Why waste your precious energies, why squander the gifts with which a bountiful Providence has endowed you in carrying on internecine strife fatal to national regeneration ? Abandon party strife, for in it lies destruction : close your ranks, for in that alone is salvation.

Would the Turkish race have had to face the misfortunes of which they have been victims in recent years if, instead of relying on the support of this power or that, they had trusted to their own God-given genius and put forth their own national strength for the regeneration of their motherland ? In these days of world-wide competition, when nations are vyiny with each other for the triumph of self, the race which bases its future hopes, not mainly upon its own exertions, but upon the potronage of others builds its castle on sand, "*Innallaha la Yughayyiro ma biqaumin hatta Yughayyiroo ma be anfusihim*", is as true to-day as it was 14 centuries ago, when, like a trumpet-call, it roused the Saracens from their deep slumbers and brought about, from within, an intellectual, moral and material change which has ever evoked wonder and admiration in the mind of the unbiased historian. External causes may compel you to quicken your onward pace; but they can never supply the place of those great forces which, springing from within your own selves, can alone impart to the national movement that vitality which is absolutely essential to the sacred cause of national regeneration. And in trusting to your own God-given genius to help you in the onward march, you must remember that permanent progress is dependent upon gradual evolution and not revolution. As I said on another occasion, nations are like the English oak, magnificent and strong when allowed spontaneons growth in God's free air, dwarfed and hideous if forced to grow in a hot-house. In India a wise Providence has placed you under the protection of an enlightened government, the liberal policy of which has provided you with every facility and every means for working out your own regeneration. Let us, therefore, make up our minds, once for all, that in self-reliance alone lies the secret of national success.

Unity, moderation and the self-reliance are the golden lessons which we, the Indian Musalmans, ought to learn from the crisis through which our brethren outside India are now passing. With these as the aspiring forces of our national progress, there is no height to which, under the aegis of the British Crown, we may not rise. Bereft of these, there is no depth to which we may not fall.

7

REAFFIRMATION OF LOYALTY TO ENGLISH RULE*

Genttlemen, I wish to tender my grateful thanks to you for the high honour you have conferred upon me in inviting me to preside over your deliberations at the Annual Session of the Muslim League. I clearly recognize that it is the highest honour in the gift of the community, and my appreciation is all the greater because it was spontaneously conferred.

At a time like the present, when differences of opinion are strongly asserting themselves, and there is a general feeling that the Musalmans of India have politically reached a parting of the ways, you will, I am sure, recognize how difficult is the position of your President. Gentlemen, I accepted the difficult task which you have invited me to undertake as a call of duty ; and I have done so in the firm conviction that you will all extend me your earnest help and assistance in the discharge of my duties, and will willingly share the responsibility which as Musalmans attaches to each one of us. The large and representative gathering of Musalmans from all parts of India who have assembled here to-day, at great personal inconvenience, proves to my mind, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the strong vitality for organized political and public life possessed by our community. I am confident that I may safely rely upon your sincere co-operation in making an earnest effort to bridge over the difficulties which confront us in a spirit of considered compromise, so that instead of parting we shall all become solidly united again, and in this way adopt the only line of action which will ensure the steady progress of the cause we all have at heart.

*Presidential addressed delivered by Sir Ibrahim Rahimtullah at the Agra session held on 30-31 December, 1913.

In all organizations such as ours, differences of opinion must prevail. It is the application of different minds to common problems and the full and free discussion of the various aspects of given questions which lead to the formation of mature decisions and advance public interest. Holding these views, I am always anxious to welcome reasoned discussion of all questions affecting our progress and well-being—with this reservation, that after a decision has been reached, we should loyally accept it and zealously work on the lines so laid down. This policy does not necessarily mean that a decision once taken should be irrevocable. No policy in this democratic age can be laid down which should be regarded in the light of the laws of the Medes and Persia s—unalterable and fixed for all time. The decision so taken should be accepted as a basis to work upon, until such time as the general body of opinion may change in view of altered circumstances, greater experience, detection of flaws and drawbacks now foreseen, and similar causes. These decisions should then be reconsidered, and modified or altered as the then prevailing conditions may require. What appears to me of the utmost importance is that all discussions should be conducted on non-party and non-personal grounds, and people finding themselves in a minority should loyally accept the clearly ascertained decision of the majority and sincerely co-operate in a spirit of military discipline in advancing the public cause on lines so laid down. Unless we are all prepared to work in furthering the cause of our community on these lines, I am afraid our progress will be retarded and very serious difficulties will continue to confront us. May I appeal to you, gentlemen, and through you to the whole of the Muslim community in India, to work for our common interests in a spirit of broad-minded toleration and sincere co-operation ? If we do so, free from all personal considerations, bearing in mind nothing but what is best for the common good, our progress will not only be sure and certain, but will be at a rate gratifying even to the impatient spirits amongst us.

The Kanpur Mosque

You are all aware that for several months the Kanpur

Mosque question greatly exercised the minds of the Muslim community in India; and it must have been with feelings of relief that you noticed that it was happily solved by the far-sighted statesmanship of H.E. Lord Hardinge, our esteemed and popular Viceroy. May I at this juncture remind you of the noble sentiments to which His Excellency gave expression, when at Delhi on the occasion of his official entry into the new capital of India, he presided at the first meeting of the newly constituted Legislative Council, meeting for the first time in Delhi ? In the memorable speech which he delivered on the occasion, His Excellency said : "Still, whatever I may feel on the subject of the crime itself, I only wish to assure you and the whole of India that this incident will in no sense influence my attitude. I will pursue, without faltering, the same policy in the future as during the past two years, and I will not waver a hair's breadth from that course."

Who will venture to deny that Lord Hardinge has faithfully fulfilled the statesmenlike pledges he gave to the people of India on that occasion ? The parental interest he has shown towards our countrymen has rightly won him the hearts of the people. This incident is valuable not merely as an episode in the history of this country; the lesson which such a policy illustrates is of inestimable value, both to Great Britain and to India. Lord Hardinge has shown what cures sincere and fatherly sympathy—not in mere words of which we have had plenty in the past, but in actual practice—can easily accomplish. It has always been a marvel to me why the British officials in India do not make a studied attempt, by means of sympathy and consideration in practice, to win over the hearts of the people of this country. May I venture to tell them how ridiculously easy it is to succeed in this direction ? One of the prominent characteristics of the Indian people is their highlydeveloped sense of gratitude. In how many places, in times of stress and strain, have not the Indian people come to the rescue of Englishmen in the past, and in how many cases have they not gone to the length of sacrificing their own lives to protect the lives of Englishmen ? If an attempt is seriously made by official India, as a religious duty, to try and

see Indian problems from the Indian point of view, and if the official always keeps before his mind's eye that he is the servant of the people of India, he will capture the Indian imagination or nothing else will do. We shall not then hear the lamentations which are being constantly dinned into our ears, of the growing difficulties of the governance of this country. It is this policy, which Lord Hardinge has laid before him and which he is trying to carry out in practice, that has so endeared him to the Indian people. Will the lesson be taken to heart by the official world in India ? If it is, they will not only smoothen their own path but the path of those amongst the Indian public men who have been striving, in the face of grave obstacles and impediments, to make officials realize how potent the effects of sympathy and consideration are.

Plea of Weakness

But there is a class of croakers who have said before, and will say again, that it is all very well to talk about winning the hearts of the people; but what about British prestige? If Government are to surrender to every agitation started against official measures, the work of administration will become impossible and the British people under these circumstances may as well clear out of the country. It is this class of irresponsible people, though they may belong to the British race, which is largely responsible for any existing estrangement. It is people who imagine that the 'mailed fist' is the best policy who are really responsible for the increasing difficulties that confront the official world. Let us calmly and judiciously examine what this cry logically means. It can only mean that once an official has taken a decision—in most cases without consulting the views of responsible people amongst those who may be affected by such a decision—and has got it ratified by Government on *ex-parte* statements, it shall be irrevocable. If the decision proves distasteful to the people concerned, they have constitutionally two courses open to them : (1) to petition Government, bringing to their notice how hurtful such a decision is and to request a reconsideration of the question; (2) to continue the agitation by holding meetings, by getting interpella-

tions put in the Legislative Councils, and by agitating in the press.

If the people affected confine themselves to the first remedy, the decision in most cases is adhered to on the ground that there was no real feeling against it amongst the people concerned.

If the agitation is carried on, on the lines indicated in the second alternative, it is contended that the agitation was manufactured by a few discontented men, that they were unnecessarily exciting the people who are always supposed to be quite content to accept decisions emanating from Government sources. When this plea, however, is found untenable and the officials are obliged to recognize that the agitation is well-founded and calls for remedial measures, it is even then strongly urged that no change or alteration should be made, in view of the fact that such action would be regarded as weakness and that the prestige of the officials would receive a death blow. A strong effort is then made to adhere to the decision previously announced, the logical consequence of such a policy being that the decision once taken must be rigidly adhered to. May I enquire, under these circumstances, how should people act who desire reconsideration and amendment of the orders and decisions announced by the authorities.

Fortunately there are high officials here who do not follow this plea, but deal with difficult and delicate problems in a wise and statesman-like manner and thus render most valuable service to both Great Britain and India. I am sure you will all agree with me in thinking that Lord Hardinge is the foremost amongst such officials at present in India, and his action far from being open to criticism is deserving of the highest commendation.

I wonder whether those critics who periodically trot out the bugbear of weakness realize what that means. To my mind it can mean only one thing, namely, that the position of the British Government in India is founded on such flimsy bases that an act of tardy justice done to the people of India by the higher authorities, as the result of strenuous representa-

tion against an executive order of decision, so seriously shakes the stability of the structure that a few such shocks would make the building totter and fall. Can the truth be further removed from this obvious inference ? The foundation of British rule in India is laid on the bed-rock of strength and righteousness, on its inherent sense of justice, and on fair play. An act of justice, call it mercy if you like, under given circumstances, far from proving hurtful to the foundations of British rule in India, to my mind, has the effect of adding further buttresses to it, if that were necessary, and draws from the depths of the peoples' hearts that feeling of gratitude and loyalty which is an asset of incalculable value to Imperial England. Has not this view been proved beyond the shadow of a doubt ? The resolutions passed by Muslim representative bodies and associations all over India on the Viceroy's announcement at Kanpur has clearly shown how far-reaching in its effects His Excellency's policy has actually proved. No one demands that Government should forthwith yield to every agitation. All that we ask for is that our representations should be examined in a judicial spirit, and that when there is a good case for the amendment, alteration or withdrawal of specific orders of the authorities, the necessary action should not be refused out of deference to that bugbear, loss of prestige. Can anyone venture to contend that our demand is in any way unreasonable ?

I will not take up much of your time in dealing with the other bogey, namely, prestige. How much good feeling has been sacrificed in the past by acting upon the imaginary advantages of this word ? Even Mr. Montague was obliged to deal with this bogey in the following pregnant words in the House of Commons : "Time was no doubt when it was a most important function of this House to see that the theory of government by prestige was not carried to excessive lengths in India. In the extreme of government by prestige, those who administer the country are, I take it, answerable only to their official superiors and no claim for redress by one of the ruled against one of the rulers can be admitted as a right. If, for instance, a member of the ruling race inflicts an injury upon a member of the governed race, no question will arise of punishing the for-

mer to redress the wrong of the latter. The only consideration will be whether prestige will be more impaired by punishing the offender, and so admit imperfection in the governing caste, or by not punishing him, and so condoning the failure of that protection of the governed which is essential to efficient government. This illustrates, as I understand the matter, the prestige theory pressed to its logical conclusion. I do not say that it was so pressed in India; it has always been tempered by British character, British opinion and the British Parliament. Whatever reliance there was in our government of India is now giving place to reliance upon even-handed justice and strength, orderly and equitable administration; but a great deal of nonsense is talked still, so it seems to me, about prestige. Call it if you will a useful asset in our relations between the British Government and the educated Indian public. Do not misunderstand me, and this I say especially to those who may do me the honour of criticizing outside these walls what I am now saying. I mean by prestige—the theory of government that I have just described—the theory that produces irresponsibility and arrogance I do not of course mean that reputation for firm and dignified administration which no government can afford to disregard."

This speech was delivered in the House of Commons in 1911; while two years later, when H.E. the Viceroy has by an act of statesmanship calmed the lacerated feelings of the Muslim community in finding a reasonable solution of the Kanpur Mosque difficulty, he is seriously charged by some of his own countrymen with having given a serious blow to their blessed prestige. No further comment on such criticism of Viceroy is called for beyond pointing out that this class of critics are so keenly solicitious of this blessed prestige that they feel it would be shaken by the public dancing of Miss Maud Allan in India !

Firing upon the People

Following the wise suggestion made by H.E. the Viceroy, when he visited Kanpur and brought about a settlement of the question, I do not wish to say anything more in regard to this

matter. There is, however, one aspect of the question which calls for a few remarks. I would not have metioned the subject if the incident had been confined to the Kanpur Mosque affair only, but as it has a grave bearing on the future, I cannot refrain from speaking about it. I wish to invite your attention to the fact that under the existing law, the power of firing upon the people under certain circumstances has been deliberately given to Government officials and there have been several instances during the past few years when this power has been exercised, resulting in serious loss of life. That the power of controlling an excited mob by firing upon them under given circumstances should remain with the officials in the interests of peace and order must be readily admitted. At the same time, adequate precautions are essentially necessary when the question is one of taking life. No ordinary circumstances could possible justify the use of firearms against the people. We have to remember that whatever the crowd in India, it is unarmed and its power of injuring the police and other people is very limited indeed. It will readily be conceded that this powe should only be exercised on occasions when the position is sc grave as to leave no other alternative for controlling and dispersing the crowd. There is bound to be considerable difference of opinion on this point, and I therefore think that it is necessary both in the interests of the official giving the order to fire and the general public that some provision should be made by which the exact facts of the case may be authoritatively investigated. I would therefore advocate that the Government of India should lay down as a standing order that an independent commission of enquiry, on which the Indian element shall be amply represented, should be appointed to institute an inquiry within a reasonable time after firing has taken place. This commission should be authorized to take evidence and to report upon the circumstances under which the order to fire was given. The very fact that such a commission would be appointed on each and every occasion when firing has to be resorted to will have a wholesome restraining effect upon the official charged by law with the responsibility of taking life, and it will create a feeling of confidence among the general public that careful and independent enquiry will be made after the

exercise of such power. It is therefore in the interests of both the officials and the general public that such a procedure should be laid down. Such an inquiry would save the official from serious adverse criticism to which in the nature of things he is open when life is actually taken. In Great Britain, in consequence of the greater development of democratic principles, firing is under serious control. During the recent Dublin riots, several members of the police were seriously injured—to the extent of being obliged to be taken to hospital. Be it remembered that the British people are not subject to the severe restrictions imposed under the Indian Arms Act, and many men amongst a British crowd may be actually armed. Even then firing is only resotred to after all other alternatives have been absolutely exhausted.

The following extracts from Reuter's telegrams will alearly show what happens in Great Britain under circumstances decidedly more grave :

London, August 31, 1913.

"Two hundred civilians and thirty police were injured in last night's rioting. One has succumbed in Hospital."

London, September 1, 1913.

"The riots continued in Dublin yesterday and two hundred cases are in hospital for injuries received. It is stated that during the police charge following upon the arrest of Larkin, a number of old men and women and children who were returning from church were struck with police batons. The Mayor announces his intention of moving that an inquiry be held into the conduct of the police."

London, September 22, 1913.

"Serious rioting took place in Dublin last evening in connection with processions of strikers. The crowd attacked and wrecked tramcars and pitched battles with the police ensued in which batons, stones and bottles were freely used. A number of rioters were taken to hospital and several police were injured."

And still there was no firing upon the crowd. In India the circumstances are entirely different. An excited mob has no weapons of an offensive character beyond brick-bats and sticks. The people of India are as a rule highly amenable to the requirements of peace and order. In such a country, the taking of life by firing upon the crowd is a more serious matter than in England. It is, therefore, doubly necessary to provide for an independent inquiry in all cases which lead to the taking of life. I can appeal with confidence to the British people and the British Government to support and to give effect to the suggestion which I have made in the interests of everyone concerned, and I do so with confidence, especially because the whole trend of British policy is humanitarian. Government have never hesitated to take measures, even when they may be regarded as unpopular, if the object is to save life. The policy of Government in organizing large camps for the relief of famine-stricken people during times of famine, and thereby saving thousands of lives which would otherwise be lost, is beyond all praise. The great impetus to sanitary measures throughout the length and breadth of this country, in spite of opposition in some quarters, has been studiously adopted with the object of preserving health and life. Nay, gentlemen, the fundamental principles on which British rule in India is based, namely, absolute non-interference with religious rites, privileges and liberties of the people of India has been deliberately departed from with a view to saving life. I refer to the law which has been enacted prohibiting the immolation of widows on the funeral pyre of their husbands. Suttees, who under a high sense of religious sentiment voluntarily offer to sacrifice their lives by a hideous death, are prohibited by law from doing so. No amount of religious sanctity attaching to this practice has deterred the British Government from enforcing by legislation that lives should not be sacrificed in this way.

Is it too much to ask the same Government to provide adequate and suitable safeguards against the taking of the lives of people who may have congregated together under some exciting cause, however trivial, and who had disobeyed the

command to disperse, in some cases because they could not do so, however willing they may have been to comply ? Is it too much to ask that every official, however well placed he may be, and whatever his status in the service of Government, should always have before his eyes the knowledge that far from receiving the unqualified support of the higher authorities in such a matter, he will have to satisfy an independent tribunal of the circumstances which justified him in taking the lives of unarmed people ? As I have already pointed out, it is necessaryin the interest of the good name of the British Government in the interest of officials upon whom the grave responsibility of giving the order to fire is imposed by law, and in the interests of the general public, that the safeguard I have indicated should be provided.

India's Civil Servants

The administration standard which Lord Hardinge has held before us in dealing with the Kanpur question lends point to the innovation which Lord Crewe, the Secretary of State for India, recently introduced. I refer to the idea of inviting all the young men who have chosen an Indian career to meet him at Whitehall and addressing them with weighty words of counsel and advice. I am inclined to think, however, that might well have improved the occasion by impressing upon them, on the eve of their entering into the Civil Service of India, the fundamental truth that they come out to this continent not to rule India but to *serve* India. The three letters of the alphabet I.C.S., which will remain attached to their names during the whole of their lives, and of which every civilian is justly proud, stand for India's civil servants and do not represent any form of rule. If the members of the Civil Service would but constantly bear in mind the incontrovertible fact that they are servants of India, and that they will, during the whole of the remainder of their lives, whether they are in active employ or retirement, eat the salt of the people of India, and that, as Mr. Montague recently stated in Parliament, they must work in co-operation with the Indian people for the promotion of the best interests of this country, not merely on the lines which may

appear best to them, but on the lines which may be regarded as best jointly by both, the work of administering the country will be greatly simplified, the progress of India will be both rapid and smooth, and the causes of estrangement and dissatisfaction will be uprooted.

During the many years which I have spent in the service of the public in the Bombay Presidency, I have come into close and intimate contact with a large number of Civilians (*I.C.Ss.*) and I have made many intimate friends amongst them. As a class, I have the highest admiration for their honesty of purpose, their stubborn integrity, their high ability and their sturdy devotion to duty. Would it be too much to ask them to cultivate a better regard for those Indian public men who devote a large portion of their time in the service of the country, who are actuated not by any sordid motives of personal gain, but by singleness of purpose in serving their countrymen; to abstain from attributing motives where none exist; to treat their opinions with respect and consideration, and to feel that perhaps there may be another aspect of questions under discussion which may require a different treatment ?

I have said that the Civilians are servants of India, as their very designation indicates, just as much as we all are in the service of our motherland. The difference is that while the former are paid for their services, the latter belong to the class not of the 'unemployed' but of the 'unpaid'. It has always been a wonder to me that men of high intellectual attainments and in active occupation in their own trades, industries, commerce and professions, men highly successful in their own private concerns, come forward in numbers to serve the country at great personal sacrifices and in the face of severe discouragement. Can better proof be required of the sturdy patriotism of such men, who readily make serious sacrifices of valuable time and money in an endeavour to render all the help that lies in their power to ensure good Government in India ? This class of men are in my opinion the most valuable Imperial asset in India and deserve all the encouragement possible in their self-

imposed task. Any feeling of suspicion and distrust towards them must result in enhancing the difficulties of the situation.

Balkan War

It must be with a feeling of relief that you will have seen the end of the Balkan War. Turkey has not been turned out bag and baggage from Europe. Though its European dominions have been curtailed, it still has a strong footing on the Continent of Europe. Adrianople, round which a strong Muslim sentiment has concerned, again flies the Turkish flag. Turkish reverses have this redeemed feature, that they brought to the surface the fact that however much Musalmans may be divided amongst themselves, the religious sentiment of Muslim brotherhood is a living force throughout the entire Muslim world. Musalman in different parts of the world have all proved their readiness to come forward in a spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion to stand by their co-religionists in their hour of trial and trouble. It is the living miracle of Islam that the sentiment of Islamic brotherhood are seated deep down in the hearts of the followers of our revered Prophet, and that the lapse of centuries has in no way blunted the effects of his noble mission.

Foreign Policy of Great Britain and Indian Musalmans

During the time of stress and strain, charges were made against the Musalmans of India that they wanted to dictate the foreign policy of Great Britain, that they desired that England should go to war to protect the Muslim States in Europe and Asia. Can anything be further removed from the truth ? The Indian Musalmans fully recognize the danger to England, with all its interests spread over the face of the whole world, to hint that she should thoughtlessly involve herself in a bloody war It is doing the Muslims of India a grave injustice to suggest that they had the remotest notion of dictating what foreign policy England should pursue. And as a matter of fact they have never dreamt of doing so. All that they have urged—and I think they had ample justification in doing so—was that Eng-

land, as the sovereign power of millions of Musalman subjects, should, out of regard for their sentiment, endeavour to see that Turkey obtained fair and just treatment in the councils of Europe. I do not think anyone could venture to assert that the request, nay even the demand, that England should do its best in the councils of Europe to ensure fair, just and equitable treatment to Turkey can possibly be regarded as being in any way unreasonable. It is because the utterances of responsible British Ministers appeared to them to indicate that England's sympathies were against the Turks that Indian Muslim feelings were naturally hurt and that they felt aggrieved. Can any fault be found with them under the circumstances ?

At the time of the declaration of war between Turkey and the Balkan Allies, Sir Edward Grey said in the House of Commons that "the great powers are taking what steps they can to prevent a breach of the peace; definite proposals were made yesterday for collective steps to be taken by or on behalf of the Great Powers to overcome these difficulties by representations to the Balkan States and at Constantinople and we agreed to them." The steps indicated by Sir Edward Grey were the declaration that "if nevertheless war breaks out between the Balkan States and the Ottoman Empire they will not admit as the result of the conflict any modifications of the territorial status quo in European Turkey." This was at the time of the commencement of the war. We may reasonably draw the inference from this declaration that if Turkey had been victorious it would not have been allowed to retain any portion of the conquerred territory. At the time war was declared, it was generally felt in the Chancelleries of Europe that the Turkish soldiers would sweep over the surrounding territory belonging to the Allies; and if these expectations had been realized, the might of Europe, including the power of England, would have been asserted to deprive Turkey of any territorial expansion as the result of its victories. But the tide of victory went the other way, and the Balkan Allies proved victorious, immediately after the conflict had begun in earnest. This completely upset the preconception of the Chancelleries of Europe; and they felt that the declaration of the maintenance of the status quo in

European Turkey would be prejudicial to the Balkan Allies. Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, took an early opportunity of then declaring that whatever may be the result of the war, the Concert of Europe could not possibly deprive the victorious party from securing the fruits of their victories. Are the Musalmans of India to be blamed if they feel that England was associated with the other European Powers in laying down and enforcing a policy that if the Turks had proved victorious in the combat, they would not have been allowed to obtain any territory belonging to any of the Balkan Allies, but that if the Balkan Allies proved victorious, they would be permitted to annex important portions of the European dominions of Turkey ? Is it reasonable that the Musalmans of India should feel that fair and equitable treatment was not being meted out to their co-religionists beyond the seas, and that England was taking a prominent part in such treatment ?

Mr. Asquith and the Peace of London

Well, as you are aware, after the Peace of London was signed and the Balkan Allies fell out amongst themselves, resulting in a redistribution of the conquered territory, Turkey, availing itself of the opportunity which became so providentially available, recaptured the town of Adrianople and the surrounding country, with which a strong Muslim sentiment was associated. Was it wise, was it statesmanlike for Mr. Asquith to declare that so far as Turkey was concerned, it would be required to lie within the boundary line settled at the Peace of London ? In the face of such and similar declarations from the highest ministers of the British Crown, no fault could be found with the Musalmans of India if they concluded that England, far from trying to be just and fair towards Turkey, far from endeavouring to secure fair play to the Muslim Khilafat, was siding against it, and was co-operating with other European Powers who are the declared enemies of the Turkish Empire. Under all this provocation, have the Musalmans done anything which would attach any blame to them ? Have they swerved in the slightest degree in their feeling of sincere loyalty towards the

British Crown ? However painful the episode has been to them, they have exercised full self-control and restraint, and their conduct far from being blameworthy deserves the highest commendation.

The South African Question

I am appealing to you to exercise patience and restraint in criticism. In doing so I have not failed to realize how extremely difficult it is at times to exercise these virtues. The feeling of indignation and horror which has spread throughout this country in regard to the treatment meted out to our fellow-countrymen and women in South Africa has led to the use of language which under the circumstances could hardly be controlled. But in the face of the grave provocation to Indian feelings and Indian sentiments, I cannot help expressing my sense of deep gratification at the masterly pronouncement which H.E. the Viceroy made in Madras. I know that the expression of his sincere feeling of sympathy with the people of this country has laid him open to severe criticism in some quarters. It is a curious anomaly that these very crit.cs, who never forget to preach to us Indians the doctrine of submitting to the views of the man on the spot, who never fail to recent interpellations and criticism in the House of Commons on the plea that men on the spot must be considered to understand the position best, that strictures levelled in England against Indian Officials should be treated with contempt as unknowing and ignorant, are the very persons who have come forward to condemn the views and the suggestions of the man on the spot occupying the highest executive position in this continent. How far-reaching is the effect for good which Lord Hardinge's speech at Madras has been instrumental in bringing about, can only be known to the people in India. Lord Hardinge, whose great merit is to keep himself in close touch with the people of this land, who manage to secure first-hand information of the extent of the feeling of indignation and horror that had permeated this country, has done by this pronouncement the greatest service to the Crown of England. Well, gentlemen, in spite of this criticism, the Boer Government has been obliged to announce the

appointment of a commission of enquiry. You all know the constitution of this commission and the South African Indian opinion of the men chosen to sit upon it. Our demand was that the commission should be so constituted as to ensure not only that the men chosen in South Africa should be such as would command the confidence of the people, but also that the representatives of this country should find seats upon it. This has not been complied with, and although the suggestion for such representation has been supported both by the official and non-official opinion in India, it has been ignored. Is it any wonder that, under the circumstances, the Indians feel that the enquiry will prove a white-washing one, and the sore will remain unhealed ?

Indians in the British Empire

But the question that is facing us to-day is not merely the treatment that our fellow-countrymen are receiving at the hands of the South African Government. It cannot be narrowed down to the present residents in the South African Union. The question is undoutedly emergent and requires to be dealt with forthwith; but the wider question that can no longer be postponed and must now be faced, that question is : "What is the position of the people of India in the British Empire ?" Australia is practically barred against us. Canada is contemplating legislation to prohibit Asiatic immigration. The attitude of South Africa is patent to you. The time is therefore ripe to ask whether we are common subjects of His Imperial Majesty the King, occupying identically the same position as the other subjects of His Majesty, or are we so in theory only ? Under the gracious proclamation of Queen Victoria, confirmed by the Royal pronouncements of Queen Victoria's two successors, pledges have been given to us in an unequivocable manner that we are citizens of the Empire. In practice, however, we find that in South Africa, in Canada and in Australia we are regarded in a manner which it is difficult to express in moderate terms. We have therefore every right to ask the British Cabinet, through the Secretary of State, for a declaration of whether they will manage to secure to us the rights and privileges of British citizenship.

If the answer to the question is in the affirmative, England has got to exercise the powers which legally vest in her to ensure to such rights and such privileges. If we are not, in spite of Royal pronoucements and Royal pledges, to receive the rights of British citizenship, if we are prohibited from settling in the British Colonies on equal terms with the white races, we are entitled to a clear and definite declaration on the point. It is necessary that we should clearly understand what our position actually is in the British Empire. If we are not entitled, in spite of the pledges already referred to, to equal rights of British citizenship, if that right on the declared authority of the British Cabinet is to be denied to us, then we shall be free to organize means nnd measures to protect ourselves against this indignity.

Retaliation is a bad word, but it has been freely used in this connection; and I do not think any one would venture to assert that the use of the word is uncalled for. Our esteemed citizen, the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, who has made the cause of the Indians in South Africa his own, considers that retaliation should be applied in the direction of a prohibition to all the South Africans from any employment under the Government of India, and of a restriction against the purchase of South African coal by the railways in India. I am afraid the retaliatory measures confined to these two things would hardly be successful in attaining the object we have at heart in enforcing the recognition of our rights of British citizenship by the Colonies of Great Britain. We will have to consider and devise means which, while being perfectly constitutional, may prove really effective. The intellectual capacity of the Indians is not so meagre as to despair of finding such an effective remedy, but the time for such measures has yet to come. We have, thankfully, to remember that the Indian Officials are supporting our cause, and that many Englishmen in South Africa appear to be in our favour. A majority of the powerful English press is sufficiently outspoken. We have therefore to wait for the final result of the present *contretemps* before concerting and pressing effective measures in this behalf. There is no Indian who does not regret the necessity of being obliged to start a war of retaliation against a component part of the mighty British Empire, but the fault lies entirely with the British Cabinet. If the British

Cabinet is absolutely powerless to secure the rights of British citizenship to the Indian subjects of the Crown, the whole responsibility of the consequences which such a policy will lead to, will be on their heads. I need hardly tell them that the result of such a course, from the Imperial standpoint, will be deplorable.

Who Won the Boer War ?

This leads me to ask a question which under existing conditions is of paramount importance. I should like to know who were the victors in the Boer War ? Whether England came out victorious and succeeded in conquering the Boer Republics or whether it was the Boers who successfully defeated Great Britain. If Great Britain was in reality the victorious party, it should not be powerless to enforce its wishes upon the Boers. But from recent pronouncements it seems obvious that the British Cabinet is in reality absolutely helpless in the matter. The plea put forward is that in Self-governing Colonies, the British Government can merely use suasion and nothing else. If this argument is carried to its logical conclution, it means that any legislation affecting the people in South Africa by the Union Parliament shall be accepted, irrespective of how it affects the different sections of the population. Well, the Union Parliament, as it is constituted at present, contains a large Boer majority. It therefore follows that any Legislation which the Boer majority in the Union Parliament may pass imposing unbearable disabilities upon English residents themselves must recieve the assent of His Majesty. England would be obliged, under such circumstances, also to declare that it is powerless to interfere with the domestic legislation of a Self-governing Colony. As a result of such legislation, the English people in Natal may be hounded out of that Colony, and still the British Cabinet, I suppose, would sit with folded arms and declare to the world its utter helplessness to secure justice to their own people. If this is a fact, then it clearly follows that, though nominally Britain won the Boer War, it was the Boers who were really victorious, and as a result of such victory, annexed the British Colony of Natal to the Republics of the Transvaal and Orange Free State. Can anything be more absurd ? Would

Great Britain remain so indifferent if the Boer majority took it into their heads to act in the manner indicated? Gentlemen, it does not require any prescience to know that the whole of Great Britain would be excited from one end to the other, and the might of Great Britain would come down on the recalcitrant Boers, and the might of England would prevail. It is only when the persons affected are the people of India that this helplessness is manifesting itself.

A curious sidelight is thrown on the issue I have raised by the public pronouncement of General Botha, the South African Premier. In the speech which he delivered on November 24, he is reported to have said that their country was part of the British Empire, yet they were as free as if they were an independent State on a footing of equality with the sister States, and they were a sister State of England: "Our first duty in the interest of the Union itself is, in my opinion, to stand on a friendly footing with the British Empire, without in any way departing from the least of our principles." I should like to know what the British ministers have to say in regard to this claim. If they admit it, could they still claim that they won the Boer War?

We are told that it is an economic question which is at the root of the trouble. The Indians are thrifty, they can live more cheaply than the white settlers, and they can successfully compete with them in trade and commerce. The doctrine of the survival of the fittest does not presumably apply to South Africa. When the Indians demand legislative and executive measures for the protection of India's economic and industrial interests, the same school which is preaching economic considerations in British Colonies trot out the principle of the 'survival of the fittest'. They want to have it both ways. May I tell them such a policy can lead to no good?

Separation of Judicial and Executive Functions

The question of the separation of the judicial and executive functions has been so well thrashed out throughout the country

that I would not have referred to it here, but for the fact of the recent discussion on the subject in the Imperial Legislative Council. I do not wish to enter into the history of the question, as it is well-known to you. There is, however, one aspect of the discussion in the Imperial Council which requires to be brought out prominently. When the resolution on the subject was put to the vote, it was found that every Indian member, whether elected or nominated voted in favour of it. It is a memorable incident in the political progress of India that all the different elements constituting Indian representation unanimously demanded that a beginning should forthwith be made in the direction of separating the judicial and executive functtions. The resolution was, of course, negatived by the official majority. Whatever the technical fate of this resolution, it raises constitutional questions of far-reaching importance.

Chosen Representatives of the People

His Majesty the King Emperor, in reply to the loyal address presented at Delhi by the Imperial Legislative Council, called the members of that body 'the chosen representatives of the people of India'. It is an undisputed fact that all the elected members are chosen by such electorates as have been laid down by Government themselves. Many of them represent all the different provinces of India on a territorial basis. Some of them represent the land-owners, and some the important Muslim community on a communal basis. Other have been nominated by His Excellency the Viceroy himself. All Indian 'chosen representatives of the people of India' have unanimously asked that a beginning should forthwith be made with this reform. Though the resolution was lost by the vote of the official majority, we are entitled to ask whether that will be the last word on the subject.

I cannot conceive that such will be the actual result. If the united voice of India expressed through their chosen representatives is powerless to secure a reform which has, as in this instance, received the support of many high officials, the recent Council reforms can hardly be regarded as an appreciable

advance on previous conditions. We have secured more seats on the Legislative Councils, we have obtained the very valuable privilege of moving resolutions and dividing the house on them, but our function still remains that of a consultative body, who are free to express their views and sentiments, but whose united voice remains inoperative. Gentlemen, I am ready to recognize that under present conditions of the administration of the country, it is necessary that there should be an official majority. I do so because the legislative functions vesting in these bodies are of a far-reaching character. A Legislative Council cannot only pass or reject fresh legislation, but can repeal and amend existing laws. It is, therefore, right that the power of the majority should remain in the hands of Government. But it is absolutely necessary that adequate safeguards should be provided against the arbitrary exercise of such power.

It is not sufficiently recognized that the non-official members of the Legislative Councils in India occupy the position of what we understand as the 'Opposition' in Parliament. I do not mean that they always oppose Government or that they work in a party spirit. The career of the Indian members of the Legislative Councils indisputably proves that they have been actuated by a high sense of duty and patriotism and have proved most useful to Government in their legislative and other work. What I do mean is that it is their function to represent the public view and offer suggestions and criticism in regard to measures introduced by Government. They work practically on some basis akin to an 'Opposition'. It is now recognised as an axiomatic truth that the efficiency of Government largely depends upon a strong Opposition. Any measures that would impair the efficiency of the Opposition would unquestionably react on the efficiency of the administration. Such an Opposition is represented by the non-official members in the Legislative Councils. There is, however, a fundamental difference between the 'Opposition' in Parliament and the Opposition in India, and I am sorry to find that is not adequately realized by Government officials. In England the party in the 'Opposition' today may well hope to sit on Government benches tomorrow. The whole attention of the party and its

press is directed towards winning the suffrages of the people of Great Britain, so that they may succeed in securing a majority at the next general elections and occupy the Government benches. As I have already said, the party in the 'Opposition' today may be the party in power tomorrow. All the power and patronage—and the extent of this is colossal in England—which may vest in the party in power today is enjoyed by the 'Opposition' tomorrow. The position of the Opposition in India is quite different. The power and patronage—and it is most extensive even in India—which must necessarily attach to the Government in office remains always in the hands of the officials. The Government benches must always remain in their occupation. The Opposition must always occupy the same seats. They can never hope to exercise, under present conditions, the power and the patronage vesting in Government and the telling influence which directly results therefrom.

In spite of this serious disability, men are found ready and willing to accept serious sacrifices in the public cause. They are ready to accept Government displeasure in the honest and conscientious discharge or their duties. Scrutinize the class of men who occupy seats on the Legislative Councils in India, and you will observe what classes they are drawn from. You will find amongst them men engaged in important trades and industries, in agriculture on an extensive scale, in professions in which they coin money. These men whose time is of the utmost value readily come forward at the call of duty to serve their country, without any hope of winning a position which will secure them the power and the patronage inseparable from the Government office. Nay, they have frequently to face official displeasure. I feel strongly that it is necessary in the interests of good government that the authorities should make every endeavour to rally this class to themselves. Far from regarding them as critics and agitators, it is best to hold them in esteem as men who are materially contributing towards the better administration of the country and who deserve all encouragement possible in their self-imposed task.

The Press Act

The remarks I have made on the question of the general position of the non-official members apply equally well to the liberty of the press. It is through non-official members of the Legislative Councils and through the responsible Indian press that Government stand to obtain direct information as regards the feelings and sentiments of the people. Just as full encouragement is needed to secure the best men to serve on the Legislative Councils, adequate liberty of expression is necessary for the Indian press. I have no sympathy with those newspapers which regard license as liberty, and are habitually transgressing the bounds of liberal journalism. At the same time, it is necessary that no undue restrictions should either be imposed or, by any action of Government officials, be felt to stand in the way of full and free discussion of public matters. The only independent source through which Government can keep itself in daily touch with the feelings and sentiments prevailing in the different parts of India is the Indian press. If the actual effect of any which measure of Government leads to a condition under Government are themselves deprived of this direct knowledge, it is harmful and mischievous in its results. I have been constrained to make these remarks because I am personally aware of the fact that the Press Act, with the wide powers it confers, is operating directly towards discouraging even well-established and long-standing Indian newspapers from freely expressing their views. I think that the time has come when the question regarding the operation of the Press Act should be carefully and judicially examined and the necessary measures applied in order to remove the disabilities now existing.

Muslim Ideals and Policy

Having touched thus briefly on current events, I should like to say a few words in regard to the question of our policy and our ideals. I do so with considerable hesitation; but I am obliged to deal with it in view of the fact that during recent times much difference of opinion has manifested itself among the Mohammedans of India, and statements have appeared in the press to the

effect that the League has been captured by the young hot-heads of the community, that it is tottering and is on the verge of collapse, that leading men amongst us are abandoning the League either openly or quietly. It will strike any one that there must be something radically wrong with the machinery by which the Musalmans have organized themselves to promote their communal interests, if these statements are true.

Before I deal with this question, I should like to place before you my own faith and belief in regard to the political future of India. I do so with a view to removing the slightest chance of my attitude being misunderstood or misconstrued. Looking to the growth of political life in India during so short a period in the life of a nation as the last 50 years, it must strike even a casual observer that the progress made by the country is phenomenal. With the liberal educational policy adopted by the British Government, we have been enabled to come in close contact with Western thought and culture, and with the history of the rise and progress of democratic institutions in the West and their present ascendency. It is but natural that our horizon should be widened and that we should become keenly anxious to move steadily forward on similar lines. I think we would not be true to our motherland if we did not strive to attain a high standard of progress on democratic line. I am one of those dreamers who firmly believe that given a sufficiently long spell of British rule in India, we are bound to become united as a nation in the real sense of the term. When that time arrives (as it is sure to do), we shall have qualified to rule the country ourselves; and self-government will be absolutely assured to us. It will be the proudest day in the history of England when, having accepted the guardianship of a people over 300 millions in number, belonging to an alien race, divided into innumerable sects and creeds, it has guided their evolution and has successfully carried out a far-sighted policy enabling them to reach a pitch of consolidation and solidarity making them perfectly qualified to govern themselves. The debt of gratitude India owes to the Crown of England for the peace and order prevailing throughout the length and breadth of this vast continent, the safety of life and property, the earnest and humanitarian policy

for our welfare and advancement, the studious efforts to train and educate us to the highest standard possible, is nothing to what India will owe when the work of this country is completed and the heritage is handed over to the children of the soil. I have called myself a dreamer, and you are welcome to regard me as such if you like; but this I will tell you that I have profound faith in the realization of my dream, and it depends upon you to exert yourselves to fulfil the destiny which is inevitably yours. No country such as India is can remain for ever under foreign rule, however beneficient that rule may be; and though British rule is undoubtedly based on beneficience and righteousness, it cannot last for ever.

India is our motherland, our proud heritage, and must in the end be handed over to us by our guardians. I regard the connection of England with India in the nature of guardianship over minor children. If I may apply the analogy, I would say that the Hindu and the Muslim are two brothers, sons of 'Mother Hind', and in a state of minority, and that Providence has chosen the British to be the guardians of the minors. I need not remind you that in the hour of our need, two European nations, namely, France and England, applied for this guardianship, and it was granted to England. How well, how nobly, the obligations so imposed have been discharged by England is evidenced in every direction to-day. The minors are gradually and steadily growing up in health and strength under the fostering care of a people who were the first to fight for democracy, and who have after centuries of travail and application raised it as a system to the present standard of efficiency. India is loyal to the backbone to England, not only for all that it has done for India, but for all which India may well hope to obtain in the future. Loyalty of an alien people, based as it is in India on a firm conviction of self-interest, is bound to be deep-rooted and genuine. Any suspicion of the deep-rooted loyalty of India is unjust and groundless. Constitutional agitation against Government measures there will be and there must be. We cannot convince our guardians without constitutional agitation; and it is the common failing of all guardians all the world over that it is difficult to convince them of the steady

growth of their wards. Such growth is largely imperceptible to them, taking place as it does under their very eyes. A I have said, the minors are in reality steadily growing up and their needs and requirements are multiplying. The wards would be false to the training which the guardian, in the noble discharge of his duties, has himself given, if they did not respectfully ask, nay clamour, for larger allowances suitable to the respective ages to which they may have reached; and the best policy to be adopted towards them is to recognize the fact from time to time and make further grants in a generous spirit.

It will be obvious to you that it depends entirely upon yourselves how early you will realize your proud destiny. It will call for the best in your nature; you will have to be patient and persevering; you will have to be prepared for all calls of self-sacrifice and devotion to your motherland. You will have to rise above petty jealousies and personal considerations; you will have to unite in a bond of Indian brotherhood to make your path easy in the stubborn task that lies before you. You will always have to bear prominently in mind that an early realization of your ultimate hopes and aspirations depends wholly upon retaining in the land the beneficient rule of the Crown of England. During the transition period, the presence of the British in India is absolutely indispensable. You are bound to grow to adult manhood in time and come into your inheritance, but you must in no way be impatient of your guardian. In trying to accelerate the pace, do not retard your progress. We have to remember also that we shall not reach the goal by the use of physical force. Anarchism and bombs never have in the history of any nation ensured progress or helped in attaining their end. Believe me, gentlemen, that when the time arrives, the force of moral pressure will be irresistable and it will absolutely ensure the realization of our proud destiny.

This is fully borne out by the noble message which His Imperial Majesty delivered to you during his recent visit to India. As you are aware, it consists of three words 'Educate, Unite and Hope'. Can any message be more pregnant with far-reaching significance ? Can better words be found in the

English language to indicate to you in what direction your future lies ? By the word 'Educate' is meant not merely the passing of examinations. It is used in a broader sense, and calls upon you to qualify yourselves for the noble destiny that awaits you. Your leaders during the past generation fully realized the significance of this word, and they advised you to concentrate your attention on educating yourselves before everything else. Their advice to eschew politics at that stage was, as you will now recognize, highly wise. But for that concentration, the Musalman community would not have made that progress in education which we see all around us to-day. Involving the Musalmans community in political strife at that stage would not have been to their interest. They had lagged far behind in the race of education. Concentration on education was essentially necessary. If the Muslim mind had been diverted into different channels, it would have proved highly detrimental to our cause. The community as a whole, following the wise guidance of their elders, devoted all their energies to educating themselves. The fruits which have resulted could not have been attained in any other way. I cannot conceive that the policy of abstaining from political life was meant to be permanent. It was clearly realized that when, as the result of concentrating attention on educational progress, the community had been raised to a sufficiently high standard, politics would come as a matter of course. How well that policy has succeeded, I need not tell such a representative gathering as I find assembled here to-day. Within the short period of six years since the date on which the Musalman community organized themselves for political work, the progress made will be admitted on all hands to be highly gratifying. This is the result of concentration on education, which as you will observe is the first word of the gracious message of His Imperial Majesty. May I ask you whether this experience does not teach us that it is best to concentrate our attention and our energies upon the next word of the Royal message, namely 'Unite' ? You are aware that however much you may qualify yourselves by education and other means, you will have to unite yourselves in a common bond of Indian brotherhood before you can hope to reach any form of self-government. Having reached the neces-

sary stage of union, there is nothing you cannot hope to obtain. There is nothing which will keep you out of your heritage. Let every Indian take to heart the gracious message of our King, in his own person and family, and try to live up to it. Every true son of India owes this debt to this country, to act on the principles enunciated; and the future, though far distant, may well be regarded as absolutely assured to you. Well, let me appeal to you and through you to all the people of India to work for your motherland on the lines indicated, and thus contribute to the ultimate fulfilment of the proud destiny which inevitably awaits you.

As I have explained, at considerable length, my political faith for the future of India, you will easily understand that I cannot object to the ideals which have been adopted by the two leading political organization of this country. The Congress ideal of self-government on Colonial lines has the advantage of being clear and definite. The League ideal of self-government suitable to India appears to me vague and indefinite. You must have had good reasons for adopting it, but I cannot help remarking that I personally would have preferred something which was more definite and distinct. Whatever the ideal, I should like to appeal to you to bear constantly in mind that nothing should be allowed to create a feeling of impatience, a desire to reach it by short cuts, or a tendency to excite the passions of the people. Nothing is more deterimental to advancing the cause of India than impatience and disaffection. Far from accelerating the pace towards the ultimate attainment of the goal, it will undoubtedly have the effect of setting the clock back.

We have recently heard a great deal about a divided feeling amongst the members of our community. It appears to me wholly unwise to fall out and be divided on a point which, even in the opinion of the most enthusiastic amongst us, will not be reached till after several decades of strenuous and united efforts. Whether the final consummation of our highest aspirations takes several decades or several scores of years or some centuries is in the womb of time. It largely depends, as I have already

pointed out, upon ourselves. Why then waste our energies in fruitless discussions and dissensions upon the form of government which we should strive to attain at the end of that indefinite period ? When a sturdy union amongst all the conflicting elements prevailing in India today is a condition precedent to any sound and steady progress, would it not be wise to devise means by which we may be able to concentrate our undivided attention on the problems of the day, and by united exertions ensure steady and solid progress ?

Everyone must recognize that no form of self-government is possible in India unless two principal communities, the Hindu and the Muslim, are closely and conscientiously united. What can be a nobler aim, a loftier goal than to endeavour to secure India united ! Once we become sincerely and genuinely united, there is no force in the world which can keep us from our heritage; without such union, the Indians will have to wait indefinitely for the realization of their fondest hopes. Instead of having differences and dissensions amongst overselves at the present time on matters of remote realization, I would earnestly appeal to all true sons of India to concentrate all their energies, all their talents on the consummation of ensuring a united India. Then we might well leave the future to take care of itself, full of hope, and full of confidence. If the two sister communities devote their energies and concentrate their efforts on the realization of such an ideal, in a spirit of reasoned compromise, all our difficulties will crumble away, and India will rise phoenix-like from the ashes of discord and struggle to a fresh and robust life, full of promise and full of hope.

Muslim Policy

The next question which I must deal with now is what should be the policy of the League as representing the Musalmans of India. The answer which I would give to the question is briefly this. Our policy towards the British Government should be one of unswerving loyalty, and towards the Hindus one of brotherly love and regard. I hold that the policy which should guide us should be that of the younger brother in a family towards his guardian and towards his elder brother. While

fully maintaining his individuality and remaining keenly alive to his own needs and requirements, he should extend to his guardian his respectful homage and to his elder brother his brotherly affection and sincere regard. My advice to you to offer unswerving loyalty and respectful homage to your guardian does not mean blind or servile submission to all his mandates. Loyalty and homage are in no way inconsistent with representation and agitation. All the constitutional means which are open and available to you should be made use of, both freely and fully, to advance India in every direction, to promote the best interests of our community, and to secure better administration by moderate and sober criticism of Government measures. It is unnecessary for me further to dilate upon this aspect of the question, as I am sure you clearly realize what your constitutional rights and privileges are. Make the best use of these, and notwithstanding all the discouragement you may meet with, persevere in your efforts and thereby make your full contribution towards the better administration of this country.

When I am advising you to extend brotherly affection and sincere regard towards the elder brother, I am not forgetting that you are entitled to reciprocity at his hands The union of the two brothers cannot stand on a one-sided arrangement. I call the Hindu the elder brother and I am sure you will agree with me in the view that he occupies that position in the Indian family. He is senior in numbers, in education, in wealth, and in many other ways. His obligations therefore, under the Indian system of family life, are necessarily greater. In order that there should be a sincere and genuine *entente*, each brother must be prepared to discharge his relative duties towards the other in the right spirit. Let us first examine whether the Musalmans have in the past endeavoured to discharge their obligation towards the Hindus. If we have not done so, we ought to be prepared to make amends and rectify our conduct. You are all aware that the birth of organized Muslim political life dates from the day on which a representative deputation from all the parts of India, headed by our acknowledged leader, His Highness the Aga Khan, waited upon Lord Minto, pressing on the attention of what I will continue to call the guardian,

the claims of the younger brother to share directly by election in the representative institution in the country. This was the first sign that the growth of the younger brother had reached a stage when his needs and requirements were keenly felt, that the training which the guardian had provided for the children was having the same effect upon the younger child as it had had upon the elder one, that the flame of patriotism had been kindled in him also (I trust never to be extinguished thereafter); and therefore he solicited those opportunities for the service of the public which had been given earlier for the benefit of the family. It appears that our steady growth was as imperceptible to the guardian as it was to the elder brother. But we could no longer remain passive spectators of the progress taking place all around us; and we desired to share the burden and the responsibility of service to our country. We craved for a part of those opportunities which had been made available to the people of India, and which had been enjoyed by the elder brother during the period of our infancy. The guardian recognized the force of our just demands, and signified his willingness to provide those opportunities which were our legitimate due. How stubbornly the elder brother resisted this recognition of our just rights is now a matter of history.

In view of the cordial relations now subsisting between the two sister communities, I do not wish to dilate upon this point; but I cannot help remarking that the elder brother lost a splendid opportunity of winning the younger one, at an impressionable age, wholly towards himself, by failing to realize the far-reaching consequences of wise statesmanship at that psychological moment. These appears to me nothing wrong or unreasonable in the demand of the Muslim community for those opportunities of serving the public directly by election which have been conceded to the people of this country. The Indian National Congress, which stands for the highest national sentiment in the country, has had to recognize the special representation of the Muslims on the All-India Congress Committee. It has also laid down as a part of its creed that, "in any representation which the Congress may make or in any demands which it may put forward for the larger association of the people of India with the administration of the country, the interests of minorities

shall be duly safeguarded." May I enquire what difference there is in principle between duly safeguarding the interests of the minorities (and the Musalmans form the most important of such minorities) in the political rights and privileges which should be demanded in the future and those which have already been obtained? I cannot conceive that the demand of the Musalmans for adequate opportunities for representation on the public bodies in the country was in any way unreasonable or unjust, or in any way militated against the ultimate realization of the brilliant destiny which awaits the people of this land. Wise statesmanship and sympathetic consideration of each other's needs and requirements are essentially necessary during the period of transition through which every country must pass before reaching its highest destiny. May I enquire whether the Muslim representatives on the Legislative Council have been in any way wanting in public spirit or independence, and whether they have not sincerely co-operated with the representatives of the other communities in promoting the best interests of the country? May I request our friends to consider what a tower of strength the association of Muslim representatives with the representatives of other communities furnishes in promoting the political cause of India? When both the representatives elected by the Hindu majority and by the Musalmans on the communal basis jointly demand the political and economic progress of the country, do they realize how difficult it would be for the guardian to resist such a united demand?

I should like to call your attention in this connection to an extract from the able speech which Mr. Badruddin Tyabji—who afterwards became the Honourable Mr. Justice Tyabji—delivered in Madras as the first Mohammedan President of the Indian National Congress. He said : "Gentlemen, it is undoubtedly true that each one of our great Indian communities has its own peculiar, social, moral, educational had even political difficulties to surmount; but so far as general political questions affecting the whole of India are concerned, I for one am utterly at a loss to understand why Musalmans should not work shoulder to shoulder with their fellow-countrymen of other races and creeds for the common benefit of all."

May I inquire whether we have not worked in the League on the broad principles laid down by a distinguished co-religionist of ours from the presidential chair of the National Congress? Examine the resolutions which the League has passed from year to year, and compare them with those passed by the Congress: you will clearly observe that on all questions affecting the common interests of the people of India we have readily and sincerely co-operated. Idealists have, however, to remember that the Musalmans of India have their own "peculiar, social, moral, educational and political difficulties to surmount", and that they have therefore to maintain their organized associations and institutions. Remaining keenly alive to our own needs and requirements, we have throughout the existence of the League extended a cordial hand of fellowship and co-operation to the sister communities, and I cannot give better advice than to ask you to continue this line of policy as the most foresighted and wise.

Two years ago, finding that Hindu and Muslim sentiment was becoming estranged and feeling that such a condition was detrimental to the well-being of the country, it was the Muslim community which took the initiative, and under the guidance of their recognized leader, H.H. the Aga Khan, went in the form of a special deputation from Nagpur, the seat of the annual session of the Muslim League, to Allahabad, the seat of the annual meeting of the Indian National Congress, to meet representative Hindus and to discuss means by which more cordial relations might be ensured. It was again the act of the younger brother, making a peace-offering to the elder, declaring in an unequivocal manner how keen and how anxious he was to reach a better understanding between the two. You are all aware that after an important discussion, a representative committee consisting of the leaders of both the communities was appointed for the purpose of discussing the points of disagreement and suggesting means and measures by which, in a spirit of reasoned compromise, more cordial relations might be brought about. Two years have passed since the date this committee was appointed, and it is to be regretted that not a single meeting has yet been held. Whatever may be the cause

for this long delay in meeting for such a laudable object, it cannot be gainsaid that we have always been anxious to discharge our obligation towards the elder brother in the right spirit. It is a matter of regret that such a splendid opportunity has not yet been utilized. If there are any reasons which make it difficult to get this Committee together, I would ask you to appoint another committee for the same purpose. I make this suggestion because I feel strongly that in the interests of India as a whole and those of each of the sister communities, it is pre-eminently desirable that representative men chosen by each should meet from time to time, and discuss points about which any disagreement or feeling may exist. Believe me, gentlemen, if a friendly discussion between the recognized leaders of both the communities takes place periodically, it will clear the atmosphere and bring them both much nearer together.

I have briefly indicated how anxious we have been to discharge our obligations towards the elder brother, and we shall always be ready to consider carefully any points on which he may feel that we have failed to do so. If there are any such points, I trust they will be authoritatively communicated to us, and I need hardly say that they will receive our anxious attention. I have already said that the brotherly relations between the two cannot stand on a one-sided arrangement. We are therefore entitled to ask that the elder brother should indulge in a little introspection and examine, for his own guidance, whether he has discharged his obviously greater duties towards the Muslim. I am sure we shall all be very interested to learn the directions in which this has been done. For a thorough understanding between the two, I think it is necessary that the suggestion which I have already made—viz., to appoint a representative committee—should be acted upon, and that it should meet periodically and discuss all the points affecting the interests and relations of each with the other. It is because I feel that far-reaching results for good will accrue from such a course that I have referred to the matter once again.

The London Branch of the Muslim League

I am sure you will all appreciate the reasons which have induced me to keep any reference to the recent happening in London to the concluding part of my address. You will recognize how delicate the matter is. The Musalmans of India have a high regard for Syed Ameer Ali, who has during the period of nearly half a century rendered yeoman service to the cause of Islam. His great achievements in the field of literature, his masterly exposition of the faith of Islam, his active co-operation with our distinguished leader, H.H. Sir Aga Khan, in promoting our political advancement are a few of the directions in which he has conferred lasting obligations upon the Musalmans. On the other hand, we have Syed Wazir Hasan and Mr. Mohammad Ali, two of our foremost workers in the interests of Islam. During the comparatively short period of their career, they have proved, beyond the shadow of a doubt, their sterling worth and their whole-hearted devotion to the Muslim cause. The singleness of purpose with which they have identified themselves with the best interests of Islam has justly earned them high appreciation. It would, under the circumstances, have been most unfortunate if the differences of opinion which manifested themselves in London should have had any permanent effect. At a time,. like the present, we could ill-afford to lose the services of such a veteran as Syed Ameer Ali, whose presence at the head of our political organization in the centre of the vast British Empire is of great value. I am sure, gentlemen, you will have learnt with a feeling of relief and gratification that through the kind offices of our esteemed leader, H.H. Sir Aga Khan, the prevailing difficulties have been overcome, and that the London League is again a united whole ready to work strenuously and zealously for the promotion of our best interests.

There is, however, one point in connection with the recent discussion which requires to be laid down emphatically. The London League must be regarded as a branch of the Parent League, as its very name indicates, and must work on the line of policy laid down in India. Differences of opinion must be

welcomed, but differences of principle cannot be alllowed. Constitutional means are open to each Branch of the League to raise questions of principle, but in that case the required procedure must be implicitly followed.

Gentlemen, you must have been amused at the criticism which has recently been levelled against what are termed the educated young Musalmans of India. Sedition and disloyalty appear to be the stock in trade of some critics. Need I tell them that there is not even the shadow of disloyalty or sedition amongst the Musalmans of India, whether young or old ? Need I add that His Majesty's Musalman subjects in India are as thoroughly loyal to-day as ever they were before ? It is perfectly true that the vivifying influence of education is having the same effect upon them as it has had upon the sister commuuities. They have become politically articulate and have organized themselves for the purpose of promoting the best interests of their community. They are availing themselves of the constitutional means open to every section of the Indian people. Can a single instance be quoted in which they have gone in the slightest degree beyond the accepted limits of constitution agitation ? Not only have we not overstepped its legitimate bounds, but I will unhesitatingly declare, on your behalf, that nothing is further removed from our minds than to engage in any movement or action which has in it the least tinge of disloyalty or sedition. It would be to the advantage of every one concerned if people would talk a little less of Indian disloyalty and sedition.

In conclusion, I beg to tender to you my grateful acknowledgements for your indulgence in bearing with me for so much time. I am deeply touched by your kindness and consideration, and beg to tender to you once again my sincere thanks for the high honour you have conferred upon me by inviting me to preside at your deliberations.

8

HAVE FAITH AND HALT NOT*

Please accept my sincere and heartfelt thanks for the great honour you have done me by electing me the President of the All-India Muslim League this year. It is a proud privilege to preside over and guide the deliberations of this distinguished gathering, where representatives of 70 million of His Britannic Majesty's Indian Muslim subjects are assembled in conference for the betterment of their condition, and for counsel and consultation together on the affair of their country. Happy is the man who has secured this privilege and is placed by the suffrage of his people in such a proud position. I feel the honour the more deeply, as it has come to me unsolicited. I am not presumptuous enough to take it merely as a personal compliment, but I take it as a tribute to the high ideals and new aspirations which are pulsating through the Islamic society of India.

Times are most unpropitious for expressing views and convictions which, in normal times of peace, there would have been no harm in frankly and unreservedly putting before our community and our Government. The present terrible conflict of nations enjoins upon us the paramount duty of saying or doing no thing which may embarrass or weaken the hands of our Government by producing undesirable excitement in the people, or lead to any impression upon foreign nations that we are in any way inimical or even indifferent to the best interests of the Empire. But I see no harm in reiterating our old demands and trying to put our own house in order. I am addressing you under a deep and heavy sense of responsibility, and with your help and

*Presidential address delivered by Mazhar-ul Haque at the Bombay session held on 30 December, 1915—1 January, 1916.

co-operation, in the performance of my difficult and delicate task, which I am sure will not be denied to me at this supreme moment, I hope to bring the deliberations of this meeting to a successful conclusion. Nor am I unmindful of my own unfitness for the great task you have entrusted to me. I am no orator and am not accustomed to speak in a style full of sonorous phrases and rounded periods; I can only speak to you as a man of ordinary intelligence who has given some thought to the questions of the day. It was when the invitation of our Secretary, my dear and esteemed friend Mr. Wazir Hasan, reached me that the difficulty of my position and the delicacy of my task flashed into my mind; but I could refuse such a request only at the risk of being charged with deserting my people at a critical juncture; so I decided to come here at your urgent call, and you must take me with all my limitations as you find me.

Tribute to the Dead

My next duty is to refer to some of the grievous losses that India has suffered during the past year. I am not going to make any distinction between Muslims and Hindus—Indians and Europeans. All those who have worked for the improvement of India are entitled to our grateful and affectionate remembrance.

To begin with our own community, the loss sustained by us in the death of that philosopher-poet and historian, Shams-ul-Ulema Maulana Altaf Husain Hali, is irreparable. His great poetical work, the *Musaddas*, electrified Muslim India. It opened our eyes, roused our sleeping energies, and infused into the minds of our countrymen a life, the effect of which we see before our eyes to-day. Indeed, the mission of the great Sir Syed himself would have remained half-unfinished, had it not been for the revivifying and rejuvenating character of the works of Hali. Sir Syed himself used to say that if God asked him on the judgement-day what work he had done in this world, he would produce a copy of the *Musaddas* and reply that he had induced Hali to write that immortal work. So high was the value placed upon Hali by perhaps the greatest judge of Muslim worth

and character in modern times.

Then we have lost in Shams-ul-Ulema Maulana Shibli Nomani a research scholar of subtle intellect and unrivalled erudition, an ardent patriot and nationalist to the very backbone, ever untiring in rousing the Muslim community from its deep slumber of ages.

In Major Syed Hasan Bilgrami, we have lost one of the dearest and most lovable personalities that could be imagined. He was a sincere and bold advocate of our cause, and the last few years of his life he devoted to the practical solution of many knotty problems of Islamic education, and made Aligarh his home and centre of many-sided activities.

The Hon'ble Khwajah Ghulam-us-Saqlain was a finished product of our Aligarh College, that great seat of Muslim learning in India, and we have lost him in the very flush of youth and the hey-day of his life. It is sad to contemplate that a career so full of promise should be cut short so soon. He was a bold social reformer, a tenacious and determined worker, a ripe and laborious scholar, a man who showed his profession in his practice, one who dared to live the life he preached.

Outside the pale of Islam, India mourns the loss of two of her greatest sons, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Sir Phirozeshah Mehta, both from this Presidency of Bombay. The time has not yet come to judge of the noble services performed by them in the cause of their motherland, nor yet is it the time fully to appreciate the magnitude of the loss sustained by the entire country. They were giants of their generation. Their life-long and selfless services to India will remain as principal landmarks in the reformation of India. They stand as a class by themselves. The whole history of India's reawakening is bound up with their lives. It is with awe and reverence that I refer to these towering personalities; and with a last respectful and silent bow I step aside, with full heart and the deepest sorrow.

Let us not forget the love and devotion of an Englishman to the cause of India. Sir Henry Cotton was an Anglo-Indian

belonging to the Civil Service; but he ever fought and worked and suffered for us. Till his dying day his thought was with India. He was not of us: yet he was ours.

Gentlemen, I have referred to these sad deaths in some detail, and my object in doing so has been to remind you of the sacrifices that these sons of India underwent in the cause of their native land, and to beg of you, and of the whole country, to bear in mind the character of their work and to draw inspiration from their great lives, so that our own may follow the lines they have marked out for us. If we follow their examples, we may be sure our endeavours will blossom into the choicest fruit.

The Annual Session—Its Imperative Need

Brethren, before I enter upon what I consider as the constructive part of my address, let me dissipate some apprehensions which have been exercising the minds of some people regarding our Session this year. In the first place there has been a minority amongst us opposed to the holding of any assemblage of the League, whilst there have been others who have been against holding it in Bombay. This minority contains leaders whose views and opinions are entitled to a respectful hearing from us because of their position, influence, ability and past services. Those holding the opinion that the Session of the League ought not to have been held at all, did so on the following grounds : first, that a world-wide war is raging and, secondly, that Turkey, an Islamic country, is ranged against the British Empire; hence any expression of views regarding the war or the general condition of India would inevitably lead to the embarrassment of the Government in its attempts to prosecute the war successfully. To my mind, this view is based upon nervousness, which entirely misappreciates the present situation. I believe we all fully realize the seriousness of this situation, and are united in our firm determination not to add one iota to the present difficulties or anxieties and, also, in our sincere effort to help our Government, both materially and morally, in every possible way. Nor do I believe that the Muslims of India have so far taken leave of their senses, and

are so little capable of exercising control and prudence or are so willing and ready to jeopardize the best interests of their country, as to utter wild and irresponsible words for the mere satisfaction of hearing their own voices. Such a brief in any one would be highly unjust to the great community, to which we have the honour to belong. Have the Muslims alone, of all the other communities inhabiting this ancient land of Hindustan, the monopoly of wild talk and foolish ideas ? When I see that the sister communities are holding their congresses and conferences in this great city, I ask myself : Are the Muslims alone to shut their mouth, sit with folded hands and keep themselves aloof from all activities ? I fail to see sound and valid reason for their silence at this time. If the prophets are to be believed, the war is going to end next spring, a new India is to arise under new conditions, and her problems are to be solved by the adoption of a new angle of vision. Are we alone to take no share in this reconstruction of our country ? Are we alone to be left behind in this race for a nobler, larger and higher life ? Are we alone to remain torpid and lifeless ? I refuse to contemplate such a degraded life for the followers of Islm in India. This is shutting one's eyes deliberately to the signs of the times. This is preferring suicide to an existence of activity full of promise, an inglorious death to glorious life. Further, our silence in these times would have been liable to ugly and mischievous interpretation. It would have been said that, of all the communities inhabiting India, it was the Muslims alone who did not raise their voice on behalf of the Empire, and who refused to stand by its side in the hour of its need and anxiety. Our past would have been entirely forgotten, and our present silence would have flung into our face. I am glad to believe that in deciding to hold the Session of the League by an overwhelming majority you have acted with prudence and foresight. Remember, this world is a world of struggle, and struggle for existence is an immutable law of nature. Those who avoid it are doomed to destruction and final extinction. There is no such thing as standing still in this world. Either we must move forward or must go backward. Upon our right choice depends our very existence. What we must do is to go on in the right direction, otherwise we are never likely to

reach the goal. If, because of our ignorance of the right path, or want of proper guidance or for any other cause, we are tempted to take the wrong direction, we shall be faced with two alternatives : either we shall have to retrace our steps, if we can, traverse the same ground over again and lose much valuable time, or we shall be doomed to destruction. These are truisms, but truisms well worth remembering, especially at this juncture. Obstacles we shall find in plenty on our way; perhaps they will at first appears to be insurmountable, but wisdom, tenacity of purpose, strength of will and self-sacrifice will surmount them all.

The other class of critics who do not approve of our holding the meeting in Bombay is, I understand, neither so influential nor so numerous as the first class. They belong to, and are the remnants of, the old school who had made a bogey of the Congress. They think it dangerous that the Hindus and Mohammedans should come together and unite for the progress of India and, therefore, they want to keep them as far apart as possible. These views have long since been exploded, and I do not think it worth while to refute them at this late hour of the day. Now every thinking man fully realizes and is thoroughly convinced that, unless the whole country unites and strenuously works for the advancement of the motherland, no isolated effort can gather that momentum which is requisite for our regeneration. However, I was glad to learn that the unfortunate controversy that over these matters was settled.

Gentlemen, there is another misapprehension which is making some people unnecessarily anxious and which I think should be removed. It is said that our object in holding the League contemporaneously with the Congress in the same city is to deal a blow at the independence of the League, and to merge its individuality with that of the Congress. Nothing could be further from the truth. Communities like individuals love and cherish their individuality. Every race and creed has its own particular features and characteristics developed in its own special way, which, in my opinion, are the chief source of its strength. It is when all combine and bring their individual characteristics into the common stock, that they contribute their

quota towards the formation of a strong and united nation. The Bengalis have their own grand characteristics, so have the Sikhs, Marhattas and Parsis. Hindus of Madras have some lively strains of character. So have we, the Muslims of India. In my opinion, we are distinguished from others by a peculiar virility of character, derived from our brilliant historical traditions, and a solidarity which binds the highest to the lowest with a common and indissoluble tie, easily attributable to the principles of our religion. Differentiation is at the bottom of evolutionary progress. When unity is evolved out of diversity, then there is real and abiding national progress. Muslims as well as Hindus have to solve their own particular problems. The Haj question is peculiar to the Muslims and affects them most nearly, whilst the problem of caste does not press us so closely as it does our Hindu brethren. Well, it may be objected that these are religious and social questions and have nothing to do with politics and the propaganda of the League. True, but these are, after all, questions which have to be solved separately by the different communities in their own ways and according to their own feelings and requirements. As a matter of fact, and speaking personally, I go further and think that even in such questions there are factors involved, such as the economic and sociological, which interact, however remotely, upon all communities and thus affect the Indian people as a whole. Under such conditions, who would assert that there is no necessity for the separate maintenance of such an institution as the All-India Muslim League, able to present an authoritative exposition of Muslim views on all questions affecting our community ? What is most objectionable is that there should be an unyielding antagonism between the principal communities of this country, such as to retard its common progress, and that, instead of an honest attempt to understand each other's views, there should be an unreasoning hostility which has produced nothing but irreparable injury to our cause. It is quite time for different communities to realize fully that they are like so many limbs to the body-politic, and any attempt by one to aggrandize itself at the expense of the other must result in injury to the whole body. But those reflections, in the present happy state of feelings, have become out of date and need not

be referred to in any detail. All communities are now united in sinking their so-called differences for the common good, and that state of feeling may continue long and develop to its utter most limits must be the prayer of every lover of India.

Islam in India

Before I proceed further, I should like the Muslims of India to realize their true position in the country. It is then alone that they can understand their rights, duties and responsibilities. Races, classes and creeds without number inhabit this ancient land. In this wonderful medley of peoples where do we come in ? Have we any real place or not ? Some people are influenced by ideas engendered by the teachings of history, often I fear, not very authentic or reliable history. The fact is that most historians, when dealing with nationalities and peoples other than their own, are obsessed either by political bias or religious prejudices. One hardly ever comes across any modern history which is free from such defects. If we desire to know the truth, we must go back to our own histories and read them in the light of modern methods.

The first advent of the Muslims in India was along these very coasts in the form of a naval expedition sent by the third Khalifa in the year 636 A.C. This was more than four hundred years before William the Conqueror defeated the Saxons at the battle of Hastings. After many vicissitudes, into the details of which it is unnecessary to go, the Muslim Empire was firmly established in India. These invaders made India their home and did not consider it a land of regrets. They lived amongst the people of the country, mixed with them freely and became true citizen of India. As a matter of fact, they had no other home but India. From time to time their number was strengthened by fresh blood from Arabia, Persia and other Muslim lands, but their ranks were swollen mainly by additions from the people of the country themselves. It is most interesting to know that out of the present 70 millions of the Muslim population, those who have claimed their descent from remote non-Indian ancestors amount only to 8 million. Whence have the remaining

millions come, if not from Indian ranks ? The Muslims enriched the hoary civilization of India with their own literature and art, evolved and developed by their creative and versatile genius. From the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, the entire country is studded with those gems of art which remind one of the glorious period of Muslim rule. The result was a new civilization which was the outcome of the combined efforts of all the peoples of India and the product of the two greatest civilizations in the history of the world. During Muslim times, all offices were equally open to all, without any distinction of class, creed or colour. The only conditions were fitness and efficiency. So we have the spectacle of a Hindu prime minister, a Hindu commander-in-chief, a Hindu finance minister and a Hindu governor of Kabul. The ethnology and folklore of India speak eloquently of manners and customs showing the influence of one people upon the other.

The only link which the Muslims kept with the countries outside India was the spiritual link of their religion. This, under the circumstances, was inevitable. Islam enjoins a brotherhood which, in my humble opinion, is much wider and more catholic than the modern European notions of nationality. It embraces people of different races, colours and countries within its fold, whilst it does not exclude the binding forces of nationality. Arabian history is full of instances when Musalmans and Christians fought side by side to defend their country from the attacks of foreign foes. These are the facts of history written in large letters, which he who runs may read. This short historical retrospect may be succinctly expressed in two words which fully and clearly describe the elements and conditions of our existence in India. We are Indian Muslims. These words, 'Indian Muslims', convey the ideas of our nationality and of our religion, and as long as we keep our duties and responsibilities arising from these factors before our eyes, we can hardly go wrong.

The Duties of Indian Muslims

Now let us find out the duties that our nationality and

religion require of us. Everyone in this assembly—and for all I know everyone outside it—will agree with me that our first and foremost duty is to our God, the King of Kings and the Ruler of the destinies of all countries and nations. We Muslims, who believe in the Divine Message—the Holy Quran—and the great Prophet of Arabia can reply to the Divine interrogatory, in one way and one way only. The Quran is all embracing in its character and scope, and has not left out the important questions of a Muslim's duties to his earthly sovereign and his non-Muslim neighbours. Our loyalty and patriotism are sustained by the motive-power of our faith, and in my estimation a bad Muslim could never be a good subject or a good citizen.

Next to God, we owe duties to sovereign, our country and our community. Our duty to our sovereign is plain and clear. Our loyalty as subjects of our King Emperor is unquestioning and unquestioned. We have proved it fully in the past and, if occasion arises, and if we are given the chance, we are prepared to prove it again. In these days of anxiety, the entire community has given its support to the utmost limit of its power, and is willing to give every help to and co-operate with the State in its gigantic task by every available means. No deed, action or speech of ours has ever hampered or is likely to hamper, the Government in its obvious duty of maintaining the prestige and power of the great Empire to which we are privileged to belong. Nor have we ever failed in giving our best support to the Government of India in its legitimate function of carrying on the administration of the country. Of course this does not mean abstinence on our part from all criticisms of Government measures where we feel convinced that they militate against the best interests of the country or the Empire; but all such criticisms must be honest, sincere and dignified, and never couched in intemperate language or offered in a carping spirit or tinged with malice. Ideas are in the air which have no relation with the actualities of Indian conditions and, if persisted in, can bring nothing but misery and disappointment. The fact should be clearly realized that Providence has joined the destiny of India with that of England and there

is no fighting against Providence. For better or worse, we have to live and work together. If I though tour destiny called for a complete separation and that it would be for the good of my country, I would not hesitate in saying so, though the penal and repressive laws might crush me afterwards. But I have no doubt in my mind and have no scruple in saying that this union is for the good of India and England, and we cannot do without the comradeship and guidance of England for a long time to come. We have derived numerous benefits and certainly more are to come in the fulness of time. But even if Indians wished it, they could not drive England out of India, nor could Englishmen, if they so desired it, leave India. If England left India to-morrow, what would be our fate ? Any nation with a small army could take possession of the country, and we should have to begin over again the work of 150 years. This is on the assumption that the new-comer would treat us exactly in the same manner as England has treated us up to this time. Would this be an advantage ? Decidedy and emphatically, no. Self-interest is the foundation upon which the intentions and actions of nations are based; and we are no exception to the rule. We must realize the actual facts and make no mistake about them.

About what we owe to our non-Muslim fellow-subjects, I have never concealed my opinion before, and I can only repeat here what I have often said. I am one of those who have never taken a narrow and sectarian view of Indian politics. When a question concerning the welfare of India and of justice to Indians arises, I am not only an Indian first, but an Indian next and an Indian to the last, an Indian and an Indian alone, favouring no community and no individual, but on the side of those who desire the advancement of India as a whole without prejudice to the rights and interests of any individual, much less of any community, whether my own or another. But whenever any question arose on which there was a clear and unmistakable divine injunction conveyed to me by my God through my Prophet, I could not even consider, let alone accept as correct, anything conflicting with that injunction, no matter on what mundane authority it was based. With divine authority as my only guide I will be

not only a Muslim first, but a Muslim next, a Muslim to the last and a Muslim and nothing but a Muslim. People may scoff and laugh, but I hold firmly to these convictions. In the affairs of my country, I stand for goodwill and close co-operation between all communities with a single eye to the progress of the motherland.

If we look sufficiently deeply into the different questions affecting India, we should find hardly any which does not affect all equally. Are we less heavily taxed than are our Hindu or Parsi brethren? Do the repressive measures passed during recent times weigh less heavily upon the Musalmans than upon the Sikhs or the Marhattas? Are the newspapers of Muslims more free than those of the Hindus? Does the administration of justice produce different effects upon the different communities of India? Are the rigours and invidious distinctions of the Arms Act reserved only for the martial races, and are the non-material free from them? No. The truth is that in all essential matters such as legislation, taxation, administration of justice, education, we are all in the same boat, and we must sink or swim together. No doubt, there are occasions when differences arise which lead to heated discussions, and in the excitement of the moment hard words are said on both sides, which are regretted afterwards. Take, for instance, the question of special electorates. We all remember the bitterness of feeling produced by the controversy, and, I am afraid, this still rankles. You all know my views on the question, views which, I am afraid, have not found favour with the vast majority of my community; but, in my humble opinion, and I say it with due deference to the opinion of others, there is no reason why such questions should not be solved by the trusted leaders of all communities and a round-table conference, discussing matters in a friendly spirit. There are a few other questions of temporary interest which do not in any way affect the essentials of our corporate life as citizens of a common land and could be easily solved by a little sobriety of judgment, based upon the principle of give and take.

As to the duties that we owe to ourselves, the first place I give to self-reliance. For too long have we relied upon others.

It is quite time that we got rid of unreliable and temporary props, stood upon our own legs and became a self-reliant people. For too long has our policy been regulated by distrust and dominated by fear. We have unnecessarily feared and distrusted the Hindus. We have had an unholy awe of authority; and we have never placed any faith in ourselves, but have made ourselves dependent on others. All this must be changed. This policy has kept us from enjoying our rightful share in the public life of our country, to the great detriment of our best interests. We must have independence, and open our eyes in the fresh air.

Then, I am afraid, I see dissension even within our own community. This must be fought with all our strength and by every fair means within our grasp. The tendency to disunion ultimately ends in disruption. These are times when new forces are coming into play and new ideals are convulsing Muslim society, ideals which have to be carefully nursed and fostered and must not be frittered away in senseless dissensions. True organization is the secret of the strength of a society, and we must be so organized that our voice will command and compel respect, and the country and the Government recognize in it the well-considered and unanimous opinion of the entire community, which it would not be easy to ignore. We cannot go on dissipating our strength in fruitless and harmful attempts at compromises that only hamper us in our onward progress. Our League has done most useful work. It is a progressive body and is ready to adapt itself to the necessities of the times; but unfortunately that sense of discipline, which would place the considered opinion of the majority over that of the minority, is sometimes lacking. I do not advocate that anyone should give up his independent views; but bickerings should cease and submission to the opinion of the majority must be insisted upon. A little self-control and sense of proportion is all that is wanted. We have numerous other duties to perform, but the time and space at my disposal are limited and you must excuse me if I do not deal with them.

What Others Owe Indian Muslims

I have dealt with the duties of the Muslims of India in their

different phases; but we have corresponding rights which entail certain duties upon others. We expect from our non-Muslim fellow-countrymen the same consideration and co-operation which we are offering to them. It takes two to make a compact. A one-sided compact is no compact and can never be lasting. If we all bore this principle in mind, there could never be any serious difficulty.

Duties of Government

Brethren, just as we owe duties to Government, similarly the Government owes duties to us. It would be ungrateful on our part not to acknowledge the innumerable advantages that India has derived from her contact with England. England has given India the inestimable blessing of peace. She has maintained order amongst us. She is protecting us from external invasion and internal anarchy. She has given us a settled Government. She has brought the inventions of science to our very doors. Lastly, she has freed the intellect of India from its cramped prison, wherein it was able to rise no higher than a blind adherence to rather out of-date authorities. To my mind, this is the greatest blessing that British rule has brought in its wake. After all, the brain rules the world; and when once it has become free and begun to perform its proper functions, without let or hindrance, progress is bound to follow as a natural consequence. England brought with her rule her noble literature, with its fine teachings of freedom and liberty. That is a real gift to India, and she can never sufficiently repay it. I freely confess all these boons and am sincerely grateful for them. But much more yet remains to be accomplished, and, from an Indian point of view, the things that have been left unaccomplished are the things that really matter in the life of a nation. England has borne the burden of India, but has not prepared her to bear her own burdens. She has not made her strong, self-reliant and self-supporting. She has not made her a nation respected by the other nations of the world. She has not developed the resources of the country, as it was her duty to develop them. She has not helped the Indian people to live a life of the greatest possible fulness. She has failed to bring out the capacities of the people of Hindustan to their fullest extent.

England's connection with India has lasted for about a century and a half, and most parts of the country have been under her direct rule during this period. But the progress India has made with all her vast resources, martial, moral and economic, is comparatively very small. Compare her with other countries. Compare her with Japan. Within 40 years Japan, from being one of the weakest and most backward countries of the world, has advanced to the position of one of the foremost and the most highly developed nations, and is counted among the great powers. But in the case of India, the government of the country has been conducted on lines which were not conducive to any better result. The children of the soil have no real share in the government of their own country. Policy is laid down and carried on by non-Indians, which oftener than not goes against the wishes of the people and ignores their sentiments. Remember, I do not attribute motives. I believe the administration of the country has been carried on by conscientious, hard-working men, who have honestly done their work according to their best lights, but their work has degenerated into a mere routine. People who have spent their lives in carrying out details can hardly ever rise above their surroundings and view things from a broader outlook.

Principles and Performance

Policies and principles of a nobler kind may be laid down by higher authorities, but their value is determined by those who have to carry them out. Thus it has often been the case in India that noble intentions have degenerated into pious wishes and even into harmful actions. If the Indian peoples were real partners in the actual governance of the country, the Indian point of view would have prevailed, much that is now admitted to have been mistaken would have been avoided, the country would have progressed and the ruling classes would have been spared the bitter, and sometimes undeserved, criticism hurled against them. Unless and until India has got a national Government and is governed for the greatest good of the Indian people, I do not see how she can be contented. India does not demand 'a place in the sun' in any aggressive sense, but she does require the light of the Indian sun for her own children.

Gentlemen, let us descend a little from generalities into details and see how the policy of the past has worked not only to our detriment, but to the positive weakening of the British rule itself. Let us see what small share we have in the larger life of the Empire. I have already said that we have no share in laying down the policy upon which India is ruled. Have we any share even in the different services of the country ? Are we allowed to serve our own land and the Empire to the best of our capacity and ability ? In every country the three premier services are considered to be the military, the naval, and the diplomatic.

Indians in the Services

Let us begin with the military. In spite of the numerous martial races who inhabit India in millions, no Indian can rise above the non-commissioned ranks. We cannot hope to gain a higher position than that of a Subedar-Major or a Risaldar-Major. Every position that would give them an independent command is closed to them. The regular army is limited in number, no volunteers are taken from our ranks, and the general population is rigorously disarmed. The Arms Act perpetuates invidious distinctions on grounds of colour and creed—distinctions most humiliating to the people of the country. Going about their ordinary daily occupations, our people may be attacked by dacoits and evilly disposed persons or even by wild beasts, but they cannot defend themselves. Even lathis have been held by some judicial authorities to be dangerous weapons. Newspapers and official communiques tell us that ordinary Naiks of our Indian Army have on the battle field conducted themselves most bravely, and have led their companies with conspicuous gallantry and ability at times when all the English officers were either killed or disabled. If our men are capable of such initiative and valiant deeds on the actual field of battle, why, Indians naturally ask, should they not be trusted in the piping times of peace ? Had they been only trained and allowed to serve, millions and millions would have sprung up by the side of England at her slightest call in this, the hour of her need. Indeed, no other nation of the world has such an inexhaustible source of strength as Great Britain has in the teeming masses

of India; but India has been so maimed and crippled in her manhood that she can help neither herself nor Great Britain.

The idea is galling and humiliating that, if a time came when India was in danger, her own sons would not be able to save their hearths and homes, the honour and lives of their wives and children, but would have to look on foreign nations like Japan and Russia for help and succour. Peace and order are the first requisites of a settled Government, and without them there would be mere chaos; but unlimited and long-continued peace has a tendency to enervate and emasculate people. To make a living nation, higher qualities are required. A spirit which will not bow before any adverse wind, an internal strength which will brave every threatened danger, a capacity which will bear all toils and troubles, a determination which will flinch from no task, however impossible it may appear, a discipline which will love and be happy in the service of the country and the Empire, are qualities necessary for the attainment of that life which I call a full life. These moral forces can only come into play when people are free and unrestricted in the exercise of all their faculties. The profession of arms is perhaps one which breeds this spirit and brings out these potential forces more than any other. To close it to any portion of humanity is to turn them into lifeless machines.

In the Navy, we cannot rise above the rank of a Laskar. Attempts are often made to keep us out even of this lowly position. India has a vast sea-board, peopled by sea-faring nations. To refuse them their birthright is to waste so much good material which would have gone to increase the strength of the Empire. Why not have a few Indian dreadnoughts and cruisers manned by Indians and commanded by their own countrymen ? It is said that the Indians are not fit for the Navy. Having not trained and tried them, it is not fair or just to say so. Try them first and, if found wanting, then you have a right to reject them. As yet Indians have never failed in offices of trust and responsibility where they have been tried. Open up new fields for them, put them in fresh positions and trust them; and I am sure that they will never be found wanting. The history of ancient India proves that the naval capacity is there; but it

lies dormant for want of sufficient opportunity.

Now I pass on to the diplomatic service. Here we are conspicuous by our entire absence from it. What prevents the Government from utilizing the intellect, the ability and the energy of our people in this direction, I fail to understand. Why should not some of the numerous posts of political residents and agents of India be opened to them ? Indians, if trained, are, in my opinion, and must, from the very fact that they are Indians, be in a better position than Englishmen to perform those duties which appertain to Indian diplomacy. Their intimate knowledge of the conditions of India and of the feelings and sentiments of the people must place them in a better position than the members of the Civil Service in negotiating those difficult and delicate matters which fall to the lot of diplomats. They must be in a better position to understand the different shades of views and opinions obtaining in the Native States and avoid giving any cause for unecessary irritation and suspicion. The paths of diplomacy would be smoothed; and the difficulties which arise from ignorance of customs, manners and ways of thought would be avoided. Further afield, I see no reason why picked Indians should not be accredited to the courts of countries outside India, as ambassadors and plenipotentiaries, and why should the post of consuls be reserved for Europeans only ? It is merely an unwillingness to allow Indians to share in the burden of the Empire prompted by mistrust and suspicion. And here, too, I am afraid, the great strength inherent in Islam, which counts nearly 100 million followers amongst His Majesty's subjects, has been thrown away, and not utilized in the political interests of the Empire. As a matter of fact, this strength has never even been realized, nor has it received that attention which it deserved from the politicians and statesmen of Europe.

Gentlemen, believe me that when I speak about these services. I have not in my mind the salaries and emoluments which such posts carry with them. To me, this is as nothing compared with the fact of our participation in the larger life of the Empire. My standpoint is that every possible source of strength should be organized and every particle of it should be

brought into play in the service of our motherland and the Empire.

In India, the Civil Service is considered to be the premier public service of the country. Here, too, we are circumscribed and hedged in by rules and regulations with make it, if not altogether impossible, at least very difficult for us to enter. The examination which is the only possible way of entry for an Indian is held in London, several thousand miles away from his home. Those educated youths who cannot bear the cost and expenses of such a journey, are entirely debarred from it, however brilliant they may be. The fortunate few, who can afford to compete with Englishmen, have to do so in a language absolutely foreign to them. Why the examination should not be held both in England and in India to give the youths of both countries equal chances is an anomaly which passes my comprehension. For a number of years the country has been loudly demanding this much-delayed justice, but instead we get the recent Indian Civil Service Act, which has entirely abolished the competitive system. No doubt the operation of the Act is temporary, but a wrong precedent has been created, and no one knows to what further developments it will lead.

In the minor services of the country, such as police, forest, education, the higher places have been reserved for Europeans, and the children of the soil have been told that the doors have been shut against them. One would have excepted that at least in these minor places Indians would not have failed, but all our protests and entreaties have been of no avail so far.

Poverty of the Masses

I pass on now to the economic development of the country. Let us see what progress we have made in this direction. Admittedly India is an agricultural country, and its real life and strength is in the teeming millions of humanity who live in the villages, principally by agriculture. Has anything really been done to raise them from their poverty-ridden and helpless condition ? In spite of the jugglery of figures in which the hearts

of statisticians delight, what is the state of the country and its peasantry ? Statistics are supposed to prove every theory advanced by men anxious to prove their case; but our eyes are our best witnesses and cannot deceive us. India is a country rich in natural resources—resources which are not inferior to those of any other country in this wide, wide world. Her land bears every variety of crops from cotton jute to wheat and mustard. Her mines produce every kind of metal from gold and iron ores down to the best coal, and not excluding numerous precious stones. She has a climate ranging from the bitterest cold to the intensest heat. Her rivers and forests are full of life and materials useful to man. In short, India is a self-contained, miniature world. In such a country what is the state of things for her inhabitants ? No toil or trouble is spared for the cultivation of their fields by the wretched and over-worked peasantry. All that manual labour can do is done, but because of the want of scientific methods and other causes beyond their control, the profits which ought to have been theirs are lost to them. Side by side with green, minutely and industriously cultivated fields, we find tiny and dilapidated mud hovels thatched with old and rotten straw. In these hovels there are neither windows nor floor cloths, and the only furniture that they boast of are a few earthen vessels and perhaps a *chatai*. Human beings and cattle herded together with no arrangements for sanitation. Such are the conditions in which the great majority of our people pass their miserable existence.

In commerce and industry we are no better of. Our old indigenous industries have been killed by foreign competition; and new attempts are crippled in the interests of other peoples than those of India. The instance of the cotton excise duties is before us—duties which have been imposed in the interests of Manchester and Lancashire. Before the war we were in the tentacles of the Teuton octopus, now we are in those of America and Japan. The Indian Government, with its vast and costly organization, has not been able to help India, but has allowed foreign countries to capture her trade and commerce and to dump their heavily subsidized goods in our markets. This was the psychological moment for helping our industries and com-

merce, but precious opportunities have been allowed to slip away from our hands.

Education

These are instances of questions from which we were rigidly excluded and upon which we were not allowed to have our say. Now, I come to some of those questions where we raised our voice in protest, when measures affecting our well-being were carried into effect in the teeth of our severe opposition. Foremost of these was the question of education. Even here vain attempts are being made to cramp and confine the intellect. It is considered that the ideas of freedom and liberty derived from the literature of England have produced disquieting symptoms in the educated youths of the country, and English education must be officialized. But I fail to see how liberal ideas can be suppressed, unless English trade in books and newspapers is altogether stopped and the entire Indian press is forbidden to reprint European books and their translations. In fact, they will have to go further and ban all Oriental books of any liberal tendency, and, I am afraid, most of them are saturated with such tendencies. Indeed, I do not understand how we can manage it, unless we transform India, to use Lord Morley's phrase, "into an ignorant. illiterate and gagged India", obliterate its ancient civilization, wipe out the goon work done by England, and make it of no use either to itself or to others. It is in the nature of education to rouse self-consciousness; and when people begin to compare their own conditions with those obtaining in other countries and discover their own backwardness, they naturally begin to try to better their condition. Education breeds a sense of patriotism and love for country, which are nowadays called by some people by a different and an opprobrious name. Instead of finding out the true causes of evils, a hasty and ill-considered remedy is applied which inevitably fails, as it is bound to fail. When Indian leaders saw the horrible state of illiteracy prevailing in India and the evil effects of it on the masses, they proposed the remedy of free and compulsory education. That great man, the late Mr. Gokhale, brought in a Bill, which in details was the

most moderate measure; but the Government refused to accept it, and to this day the Anglo-Indian press misses no opportunity of misrepresenting its provisions. If the Bill had been accepted, India would have become literate not immediately and not at once, but in 40 years, and the people themselves would have borne the expenditure. The measure was so moderate that it was to be introduced in only those localities where a majority of the people consented to its introduction. One would have thought that the Government would have embraced this opportunity of doing a good turn to the people and gaining their affection and gratitude, but curious ideas prevailed and the Bill was rejected to the regret of the entire country.

Repressive Legislation

I now pass on to two of the recent repressive measures, the Press Act and the Defence of India Act. These Acts have worked harshly and told heavily upon the persons and properties of some leaders of our community. Musalmans are intensely agitated, and I should be grossly negligent in the discharge of my duties as the spokesman of Muslim India, if I failed to give voice to their feelings on the subject. On principle and by sentiment, I object to repression and coercion, be it from the Government or from any section of a disaffected people. Fear is the motive force in both cases. From the first dawn of human polity, there have been two methods of dealing with people. You can rule them through fear or rule them through love. It cannot be denied that coercion and terrorism, whether that of rulers or of rebels, do occasionally succeed. But its success is temporary; the reaction is terrible and follows swiftly. These short cuts to a solution of political difficulties, whether they be undertaken by the rulers or by their disaffected subjects, only end in disaster. Terrorism is a *cul-de-sac* leading nowhere, and sooner or later the terrorist must retrace his footsteps. The only lasting bond is that of love. The road is long, but never wearisome. This is a time of great crisis in the life of the British Empire, and, therefore, there is all the more reason to subject the people of India to the compelling force of love, and not to the fleeting force of fear. Repression generally defeats

its own purposes. To the terrorists among our own people, I can say with confidence that they can never hope to terrorize a powerful nation like the British. To the coercionist among our rulers, I can say with equal confidence that they can never hope to repress the rising hopes and aspirations of 315 million people. The policy of repression is an insult to God, Who surely could not have created one-fifth of humanity in His own image and yet made dumb driven cattle of them all. But it is no less an insult to the countrymen of Shakespeare and Milton to think that repression could ultimately and finally succeed in cowing down those whose only crime was that they fearlessly 'speak the tongue' that Shakespeare spoke and held 'the faith and morals' that Milton held.

I remember well, how and under what conditions the Press Act was passed. The members of the Imperial Council gave their consent to the passing of the Bill on the express understanding that the law was intended for the anarchists, and would never be applied in the case of peaceful citizens anxious to enlighten Government officers as to the sentiments and feelings of the people. But what is the result ? All the independent Muslim papers have either been wiped out or are dragging on a lifeless and miserable existence. The *Comrade* is gone. The *Hamdard* has been strangled to death. The *Muslim Gazette* ceazed to exist long ago. *Al-Hilal* is no more. The *Zamindar* is carrying on its colourless existence with a sword of Democles always hanging over its head. Who ever thought that the Press Act would be applied in this fashion ? Is it possible for the people not to resent such treatment, and are their feelings to be treated so lightly ? Feelings and sentiments are not made to order, but they easily respond to kindness and sympathy.

Internment of Muslim Leaders

Under the Defence of India Act, Muslim leaders like Mohmmad Ali, Zafar Ali and Shaukat Ali and some other Muslims have been deprived of their liberty and interned. Please do not misunderstand me. It is my honest conviction that no Government in the world could, without betraying its trust, dis-

pense with such protective legislation as might prove necessary in the difficult times we are now passing through. Every Government is bound to protect itself and the people over whom it rules by laws which save them from external and internal trouble. What I object to is the manner in which these laws have been worked to the injury of Muslim leaders of great influence and popularity. No reasons have been given for their internment and people are left to indulge in their own guesses and surmises. In my opinion the right procedure would have been to take the people into confidence, give them full, frank and straight-forward reasons for these extraordinary internments, and then have left the whole matter to the sanity of their judgment. Provided the reasons were sufficient and justifiable, I cannot conceive of the possibility of the vast majority of Muslims objecting to the Government action in spite of the great services of these gentlemen to the cause of Islam and India. But an opposite course, that of secrecy, resulting in irritation and excitement, was adopted. Musalmans feel that their leaders have been the victims of that unholy spy system which has wrought so much mischief and has created bad blood in the country. At this juncture, I can with justice say that no Indian community has had its loyalty put to a greater test during this war than the Muslims, and we have every cause to complain that Muslim loyalty has not been appreciated by the powers that be. Musalmans have given ample expression to their desire to remain peaceful and law-abiding members of the British Empire, and in deference to non-Muslim and official susceptibilities have left much unsaid to which they might with justice have given free expression. This self-restraint and self-abnegation deserved better treatment. The best way to create trust is to trust others, for mistrust begets nothing but mistrust. Knowing the feeling of the community on this point as I do, I think it is to their great credit that so little has been heard of public demonstrations. Their sense of responsibility prevented them from venting their feelings in public; Government should not remain under the false impression that the Musalmans of India approve of its actions. No, they do not; and if there be a real desire to soothe their ruffled feelings, it is high time that these leaders were restored to freedom at an early date.

Mr. Mohammad Ali, with that great and venerable leader, Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk, now to our deep sorrow lying on a bed of sickness, was one of the principal founders of our League, and both are greatly missed in our session to-day.

Protection of Religious Buildings

Another urgent demand of the country has been shelved, on the grounds that it is of a controversial nature—I mean the measure for the safety of religious buildings. Our leader, the Hon'ble the Raja Sahib of Mahmudabad, has told us that his attempts in this direction have not succeeded. Really, my mind fails to grasp who the people are who contest the measure, and on what grounds ? Surely no opposition can possibly come from the Indians themselves. They are all united. Does it come from the officials ? Our Indian religions have been protected by Parliamentary Statutes and Royal pledges, and no interference can be tolerated by any authority in matters religious It is a profound pity that such golden opportunities for reconciling the people and gaining their affections are so lightly thrown away.

Men of Blood and Iron

Although I have critized the Indian administration, I have also indicated the lines upon which reforms are urgently called for in the government of the country. If we are to be counted among living nations, these reforms must be achieved. To be a self-respecting nation and one respected by others is the aspiration of Indian people. But unfortunately, opposition comes from a certain number of officials who do not believe in Indians thinking for themselves. They tell us that, as we are properly governed, we need not trouble ourselves about the other good things of this world and must not clamour for them. Unfortunately amongst them there are men who belong to the party of 'powder and shot and no damn nonsense'. They do not recognize that Indians have any right. To them, any act of elemency or justice tempered by mercy is what they call 'killing by kindness'. They believe in administering the law

with extreme rigour and showing no consideration for the feellings of the people. Even when a good, kind and statesmanlike Viceroy like Lord Hardinge saves 14 human beings from the gallows, they raise their voice the loudest, and say that such an act of mercy must presage the downfall of the British Empire, as if English rule were based upon such insecure supports and unstable foundations. They do not realize that it is the personality of this great Englishman and his popularity amongst Indians, and not the repressive measures, that have largely contributed towards the solution of many vexed questions and have kept India peaceful and quiet. It is not possible to co-operate with such people, unless their frame of mind is altered. These are men of blood and iron and refuse to concede any little point in favour of Indians. They are too short-sighted to look into the future and safeguard the interests of the Empire. But fortunately the race of great statesmen has not become extinct in England. There are men who see far ahead and can read the future with a clearer sight.

The present dreadful world cataclysm has brought about new conditions; and mighty transformations are in progress. We are on the eve of eventful changes, and the East is moving towards its inevitable destiny; but no one knows what lies behind the loom of time. New ideas are springing up, and questions are being looked at from new points of view. A new bond has been cemented between the two races by the blood of our people on the battlefields of Europe, Asia and Africa. India has refrained from no sacrifices which were asked of her and which it was in her power to give. She could give much more and supply the needs of England out of her own resources, if she were freely developed. And mind, India has shed her blood and undergone sacrifices, not in the hope of favours to come, but of her own free will and accord. Surely, all this cannot go for nothing and must be taken into account and must influence the re-adjustment of the fabric of Empire about which we hear so much. Some say, whatever you may gain, you cannot get self-government for India. They state that our country is not prepared for self-government, and the best form of rule that she can have in the

present circumstances is benevolent despotism. True, but where to get the despot who would rule such a vast country with benevolence ? What we find is that instead of one benevolent despot we have a number of despots who are anything but benevolent. No, gentlemen, the only form of government which is possible for India is that embodied in the Constitution of our League, and that is self-government suitable to the needs and requirements of the country under the aegis of the British Crown. Then and then alone will India be contented and a *camaraderie* spring up between the two races which will cement the bonds of fellowship. Instead of a policy of mistrust and suspicion, we must have a policy of trust and confidence. Let there be no misunderstanding about these essentials in the government of the country.

Reconstruction

Gentlemen, our demands are neither immediate nor peremptory. We can wait and must wait till the end of the war, when the whole Empire will be reconstructed upon new lines; but there is no harm in postulating our demands now and informing the British people of the unity and the intensity with which the reforms are insisted upon. When the affairs of the Empire are taken into consideration, our views should be before the English nation. Of course, we cannot expect that India will change in the twinkling of an eye by some magical process, but we do hope that a new policy will be initiated which will end in self-government and give us the status and power of a living nation. The reforms must come steadily, but surely. Hope deferred maketh the heart sick, and delay deprives reforms of all their grace. If you ask me to give you indications of reforms which are immediately needed, I would say that the first step towards self-government must be taken by abolishing the packed official majority in the Imperial Council. We must have a sure and safe elected non-official majoriry, which would discuss and deal with all-India questions from the Indian standpoint. The late Lord Minto was quite right when he recommended this very reform which I am placing before you now. Next, we must free the Executive Council of the Viceroy from

the incubus of the bureaucracy. Then fierce light would be thrown into the dark corners of Indian administration. We must have more Indians in the Executive Council, which is really the chief source from which policies emanate. In England members of the Cabinet are not drawn from the official classes, but from the non-official. Again, a great reform that is needed is what has been called 'Provincial Autonomy'. Provinces are now working within the circumscribed limits allowed by the Government of India. In domestic affairs and finance they should have the fullest liberty of action. Local self-government should not be a mere sham, but based on real foundations as contemplated by that noble Viceroy, the Marquis of Ripon. The Arms Act must disappear from the Satute Book, and no limitation should be laid on the entry of Indians into any Public Service as I have clearly indicated in my speech. Volunteers should be enlisted freely from all classes. Agriculture must be improved and commerce and industry helped. Education will have to be free and compulsory. These are the points which come to my mind at present. I have not tried to be exhaustive, nor is it possible for me to be so. I have refrained from laying down any cut-and-dried scheme of self-government. I suggest that there should be unanimity on these questions amongst all the people of India, and I can conceive of no better agency than that of a joint deputation of the Congress and the League, which would place our demands before the British public and the British Government. Of course, before such a deputation is formed there must be a joint conference of the trusted leaders of both these organizations in which a general agreement must be come to, and the interests of all safeguarded. Such an agreement should be placed before public meetings of the recognized political institutions of the different communities for confirmation. I have no doubt that such a representation would command a sympathetic hearing from the British nation.

A Cherished Desire of Muslims

Before I conclude, there is one other matter which is deeply felt by our community; and I know that it is the desire of a vast majority of Musalmans that I should speak on it. It is a rather

delicate subject; but it is better that our feelings and sentiments should be expressed frankly, although with a proper sense of responsibility. It is a sore point with us that the Government of our Caliph should be at war with the Government of our King Emperor. We should all have been pleased to see our brethren-in-faith fighting side by side with the soldiers of the British Empire. Whatever view one may take of the policy adopted by Islamic countries in the present war, Indian Muslims never desired, nor ever can desire, hostility between British and Islamic Governments. That the hositility should have come about is the greatest misfortune that could possibly have befallen Indian Muslims. But this the fates decreed. I have no desire to enter into details; but a vast majority of my co-religionists and, for the matter of that, numerous Englishmen, too, attribute it to the past foreign policy of Great Britain and to the failure of British diplomacy. However that may be, it is the cherished desire of the followers of Islam that when peace comes, and pray God that it will come soon, the Muslim countries should be dealt with in such a way that their dignity will not be compromised in the future. There are 400 million of Musalmans in the world, bound together in common brotherhood, whose feelings and sentiments should not be ignored in any settlement which may be arrived at. There is a living force and a great potential strength in this vast human brotherhood which, if properly realized, would be an immense asset.

Conclusion

Brethren, I have finished. I have said what I had to say without any reservation and without any *arriere pensee*. I have indicated the lines upon which our country should work and have abstained from going into details. My concluding words to you are : Have faith in our own selves and trust in God above. With an undaunted heart and unflinching determination march forward towards that irresistible destiny which has been reserved for you in your Sacred Book. Halt not, falter not, Amen !

9

CONSTIUTIONAL FIGHT FOR SELF-RULE WITHIN THE EMPIRE

No mere conventional words are needed on my part to express my deep thanks for the great privilege you have conferred on me by selecting me as President of the Ninth Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League. The honour is the highest in the gift of the Muslim community, to which those alone may aspire who have given freely of their thought and time to the service of the communal cause. I am fully sensible of how little I have done to deserve such distinction, nor could I have the presumption to desire it with such a clear sense of my own unworthiness. This choice, however, has come to me in the nature of a mandate from my community, and in such cases individual considerations cannot and must not stand in the way of the larger will. I accept the great and heavy responsibilities of the position only in the belief that I can unreservedly count on your sympathy, zeal and ready co-operation in the great task that lies before us.

As President of the Bombay Presidency Provincial Conference, which was held at Ahmedabad only a few weeks ago, I have had to make a pronouncement; but at the time I accepted the honour of presiding over the Conference, I did not know that I should have this unique honour and responsibility of expressing my views as your President again within so short a time. Much of the ground was covered by me in that speech of mine. I do not now wish to repeat what I said then, nor do I wish to deal with many great and burning questions and problems that effect India in its internal administration. They will, no doubt, be placed before you in the form of resolutions which

*Presidential address delivered by M.A. Jinnah at the Lucknow session held on 30-31 December, 1916.

will be submitted by the speakers in charge of them for your deliberation and consideration. At the present moment the attention of the country at large is entirely concentrated and solely rivetted on the war and what will happen after the war. I have, therefore, decided mainly to deal with the situation in my Presidential Address on those lines, and I will endeavour to place before you my humble views for your consideration, at the same time hoping and trusting that my feeble voice may reach those who hold the destinies of India in their hands.

Annual Stock-Taking

In this great annual meeting of representative Musalmans from all parts of India, who have come to deliberate and take counsel together on the large and important issues that govern our destiny in this land, it will not be out of place to take a wide survey of the conditions in which our lot is cast. This primarily the time for annual stock-taking, for testing our position in the light of the experience of the past year, for an intelligent preparation of ways and means for meeting the demands of the future, and above all, for refreshing so to speak, the ideals that feed the springs of our faith, hopes and endeavour. This I take to be the fundamental object for which the annual sessions of political bodies like the All-India Muslim League are held. The circumstances, however, in which we meet to-day, are exceptional and mark a new epoch in the history of our country. All that is great and inspiring to the common affairs of men, for which the noblest and most valiant of mankind have lived and wrought and suffered in all ages and all climes, is now moving India out of its depths. The whole country is awakening to the call of its destiny and is scanning the new horizons with eager hope. A new spirit of earnestness, confidence and resolution is abroad in the land. In all directions are visible the stirrings of a new life. The Musalmans of India would be false to themselves and the traditions of their past, had they not shared to the full the new hope that is moving India's patriotic sons to-day, or had they failed to respond to the call of their country. Their gaze, like that of their Hindu fellow-countrymen, is fixed on the future.

But, gentlemen of the All-India Muslim League, remember that the gaze of your community and of the whole country is at this moment fixed on you. The decisions that you may take in this historic hall, and at this historic session of the League, will go forth with all the force and weight that can legitimately be claimed by the chosen leaders and representatives of 70 million Indian Musalmans. On the nature of those decisions will depend, in a large measure, the fate of India's future, of India's unity, and of our common ideals and aspirations for constitutional freedom. The moment for decision has arrived. The alternatives are clear and unmistakable. The choice lies in our hands.

The War

The future historian, while chronicling the cataclysms and convulsions of these times, will not fail to note the conjunction of events of boundless influence and scope that have made the fortunes of India so largely dependent on the united will and effort of this generation. These events have, of course, flowed from the worldshaking crisis into which Europe was plunged in August 1914. What this dark period has meant in accumulated agony, suffering, destruction and loss to mankind, is beyond any standard of computation known to history. With the unfolding of this appalling tragedy have emerged into light, stark elemental forces of savagery that lay behind a bright and glittering mask of *Kultur*, which threaten to sweep away the very foundations of civilized life and society. The issues which are in death grips on the battlefield of three continents, go to the roots of the principles on which the fabric of modern civilization has been reared by the energy and toil of countless generations. Freedom, justice, right and public law are pitted against despotism, aggression, anarchy and brute force, and the result of this deadly combat will decide the future of mankind, whether the end will come with a stricken and shattered world, lying bleeding and helpless under the iron heel of the tyrant, with the whole of humanity stripped bare of its hope and faith and reduced to bondage, or whether the hideous nightmare will pass away and the world, redeemed by the blood of the heroic

defenders of civilization and freedom, regains its heritage of peace and reconstruction.

These are tremendous issues and the blood of every Indian, with his usual gift of quick moral perception, is stirred by the feeling that he is a citizen of an empire which has staked its all in a supreme endeavour to vindicate the cause of freedom and of right. What India has given in this fellowship of service and sacrifice has been a free and spontaneous tribute to the ideals of the great British nation, as well as a necessary contribution to the strength of the fighting forces of civilization, which are so valiantly rolling back the tides of scientifically organized barbarism. In this willing service of the people of India, there has been no distinction of class or creed. It has come from every part of the land and from every community with equal readiness and devotion. In this service there has been no cold, calculating instinct at work. It has sprung from a clear compelling sense of duty and moral sympathy and not from any commercial desire to make a safe political investment. India's loyalty to the Empire has set no price on itself.

After such colossal upheavals as this War, the world cannot quietly slip back into its old grooves of life and thought. Much of what the existing generations have known in social and political arrangements is visibly passing away under a deluge of blood and fire. The thick crust of materialism and pampered ease, the inertia of habit, the cramping weight of convention and of institutions that have outlived their use, have fallen off from the lives of the great Western Democracies under the stress of this great struggle for their existence. They have been thrown back on themselves. In the hot furnace of elemental passions, the trifles are being burnt to ashes, the gold is being made pure of dross; and when the terrible ordeal has passed, the liberated soul will feel almost primeval ease and power to plan, to build and to create afresh ampler and freer conditions of life for the future. The range of choice would be unlimited and the need for bold constructive efforts in various directions vital and urgent. Europe after the war will call for statesmanship of a new order to undertake the gigantic tasks of peace.

The greatest victory for freedom will have to be conserved. Free nations will have to learn to live freely and intensely. Freedom itself will have to be organized, its bounds made vaster and its powers of self-preservation strengthened and increased.

The Indian Problem

These tasks have a peculiar urgency and significance in the case of the vast and various communities comprising the British Empire. And among the complex series of problems relating to the Imperial reconstruction awaiting British statesmanship, none is of more anxious moment than the problem of reconstruction in India. I need not set about to discuss in detail the Indian problem in all its bearings. It has been discussed threadbare by all manner of men from every conceivable angle of vision. However, there are two cardinal facts about the Indian situation which practical statesmanship will have to take into account while addressing itself to the study of the problem and its adequate solution. There is, first, the great fact of British rule in India with its Western character and standards of administration, which while retaining absolute power of initiative, direction and decision, has maintained, for many decades, unbroken peace and order in the land, administered evenhanded justice, brought the Indian mind, through a widespread system of Western education, into contact with the thought and ideals of the West, and thus led to the birth of a great and living movement for the intellectual and moral regeneration of the people. Here I may quote from the speech of H.E. Lord Chelmsford delivered in Calcutta the other day : "The growing self-respect and self-consciousness of her (India's) people are plants that we ourselves have watered." Secondly, there is the fact of the existence of a powerful, unifying process—the most vital and interesting result of Western education in the country—which is creating out of the diverse mass of race and creed a new India, fast growing into unity of thought, purpose and outlook, responsive to new appeals of territorial patriotism and nationality, stirring with new energy and aspiration and becoming daily more purposeful and eager to recover its birthright to direct its own affairs and govern itself. To put it briefly, we

have a powerful and efficient bureaucracy of British officers responsible only to the British Parliament, governing, with methods known as benevolent despotism, a people that have grown fully conscious of their destiny and are peacefully struggling for political freedom. This is the Indian problem in a nutshell. The task of British statesmanship is to find a prompt, peaceful and enduring solution of this problem.

If it were possible to isolate the tangled group of social and political phenomena and subject it to a thorough investigation by reason unalloyed by sentiment, it would be infinitely easier to find a safe and sure path for Indian political development and advance. But, as you know, pure, unalloyed reason is not the chief motive power in human things. In the affairs of our common secular existence, we have to deal not with angels, but with men, with passions, prejudices, personal idiosyncrasies, innumerable cross currents of motive, of desire, hope, fear and hate. The Indian problem has all such formidable complications in its texture. We have, for instance, the large and trained body of English officials who carry on the administration of the country and exercise power over the well being and happiness of the teeming millions of this land. They are most of them hard-working, efficient and conscientious public servants, and yet they are beset by the prejudices and limitations that mark them as a class apart. They are naturally conservative, have a rooten horror of bold administrative changes or constitutional experiments, are reluctant to part with power or associate Indians freely in the government of the country. Their main concern appears to be to work the machine smoothly, content to go through their common round from day to day; and they feel bored and worried and upset by the loud, confident and unsettling accents of New India. All this is eminently human; but it also means an enormous aggravation of the difficulties in the path of final settlement. It means in actual experience, the growth of a tremendous class-interest, the interest of the governing class as distinct from, if not wholly opposed to, the interest of the governed. It is, in fact, the existence of this vast, powerful and by no means silent 'interest' that explains the origin and wide currency of certain shallow,

bastard and desperate political maxims, which are flung into the face of Indian patriots at the least provocation. They are familiar enough to all students of Indian affairs. As a sample, we may take the following :

1. Democratic institutions cannot thrive in the environment of the East. (Why ? Were democratic institutions unknown to the Hindu and Mohammedans in the past ? What was the village panchayet ? What are the history, the traditions, the literature and the precepts of Islam ? There are no people in the world who are more democratic, even in their religion, than the Musalmans).

2. The only form of government suitable to India is autocracy, tempered by English (European) efficiency and character. (All nations have had to go through the experience of despotic or autocratic government at one time or the other in the history of the world. Russia was liberated to a certain extent only a few years ago. France and England had to struggle before they conquered the autocracy. Is India to remain under the heel of a novel form of autocracy in the shape of bureaucracy for all time to come, when Japan and even China have set up constitutional governments on the democratic lines of Great Britain and America ?)

3. (a) The interests of the educated classes are opposed to those of the Indian masses; and

(b) The former would oppress the latter if the strong protecting hand of the British official were withdrawn.

(This astonishing proposition beats all reason and sense. It is suggested that we who are the very kith and kin of the masses, most of us springing from the middle classes, are likely to oppress the people if more power is conferred; that the masses require protection at the hands of the English Officials, between whom and the people there is nothing in common; that our interests are opposed to those of the masses—in what respect, it is never pointed out—and that, therefore, the monopoly

of the administrative control should continue in the hands of non-Indian officials. This insidious suggestion, which is so flippantly made, is intended to secure the longest possible lease for the bureaucracy and to enjoy their monopoly. But it can neither stand the light of facts, nor the analysis of truth. One has only to look at the past records of the Congress for more than a quarter of a century, and of the All-India Muslim League, to dismiss this specious plea The educated people of this country have shown greater anxiety and solicitude for the welfare and advancement of the masses than for any other question during the last quarter of a century.)

4. Indians are unfit to govern themselves. (With this last question, I propose to deal later in my speech.)

These are a few of the baseless and silly generalities in which the advocates of the existing methods of Indian governance indulge freely and provocatively when the least menace arises to the monopoly of the bureaucratic authority and power

Again, if we turn to the internal situation in India, we meet with a set of social, ethnological and cultural conditions unparalleled in recorded history. We have a vast continent inhabited by 315 million people sprung from various racial stocks, inheriting various cultures, and professing a variety of religious creeds. This stupendous human group, thrown together under one physical and political environment, is still in various stages of intellectual and moral growth. All this means a great diversity of outlook, purpose and endeavour. Every Indian Nationalist who has given close and anxious thought to the problem of nation-building in India, fully realizes the magnitude of his task. He is not afraid of admitting frankly that difficulties exist in his path. Such difficulties have no terrors for him. They are already vanishing before the forces which are developing in the new spirit.

India for the Indians

Well, these are the broad aspects of the Indian problem and

will give you a fair idea of the obstacles that stand in the way of a full and speedy realization of the ideals of Indian patriots. We have a powerfully organized body of conservative 'interest', on the one hand, and a lack of complete organization of the national will and intelligence, on the other. There is, however, one fundamental fact that stands out clear and unmistakable, which no sophistry of argument and no pseudo-scientific theories about colour and race can disguise. Amid the clash of warring interests and the noise of foolish catchwords, no cool-headed student of Indian affairs can lose sight of the great obvious truism than India is in the first and the last resort for the Indians. Be the time near or distant, the Indian people are bound to attain to their full stature as a self-governing nation. No force in the world can rob them of their destiny and thwart the purposes of Providence. British statesmanship has not become bankrupt or utterly bereft of its faculty of clear political perception; and its is, therefore, bound to recognize that the working of the law of national development in India, which came to birth with the British rule itself, and is daily gathering momentum under the pressure of the world-forces of freedom and progress, must sooner or later produce a change in the principles and methods of Indian governance. It is inevitable. Then why fight against it, why ignore it, why should there not rather be honest, straightforward efforts to clear the way of doubts, suspicions and senseless antagonisms to that glorious consummation ? Leaving aside the hair-brained twaddle of the tribe of scientific peddlers who love to sit in judgement on the East and ape political philosophy, no man with the least pretensions to common sense can affect to maintain that the Indian humanity is stamped with a ruthless psychology and cramped for ever within the prison of its skull. If the Indians are not pariahs of nature, if they are not out of the pale or operation of the laws that govern mankind elsewhere, if their minds can grow in knowledge and power and can think and plan and organize together for common needs of the present and for common hopes of the future, then the only future for them is self-government, i.e., the attainment of the power to apply, through properly organized channels, the common national will and intelligence to the needs and tasks of their national existence.

The cant of unfitness must die. The laws of nature and the doctrines of common humanity are not different in the East.

Official Attitude

It is a great relief to think that some of the responsible Britsh statesmen have definitely pronounced in recent years that India's ambition to attain self-government is neither a catastrophe nor a sin. Indeed, that great and sympathetic Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, whose memory will always be cherished with affection by the people of this country, for the first time recognized the legitimacy of that vital Indian aspiration. Other indications have not been wanting of late, which go to show that our natianal dream and purpose is gaining the stamp of even official approval. There is, however, a world of difference between a theoretical approval of an ideal and its practical application. The supreme duty of the men that lead the forces of Indian progress is to insist that India's rulers should definitely set the ideal before them as the ultimate goal to be attained within reasonable time, and should accelerate the pace accordingly. All our difficulties now arise from the steady reluctance on the part of Indian officialdom to keep this end definitely in view and move faster. Mere sympathy divorced from resolute and active progressive policy can hardly ameliorate the situation. Honeyed words alone cannot suffice. We may congratulate each other about a changed 'angle of vision' and yet remain where we are till doomsday. The time for definite decision and a bold move forward has arrived. The vital question to-day is : is India fit to be free and to what extent ? There can be no shelving of the issue at this juncture. It has to be settled one way or the other. If she is not fit to-day, she has got to be made fit for self-government. This, I maintain, is no less a duty and responsibility of the Government than of the people themselves.

Is India fit for freedom ? We who are present here to-day know full well that from the Indian standpoint there can be but one answer. Our critics would probably challenge our

conviction. Our only reply to them would be to go forward and put the matter to the proof. After all, what is the test of fitness? If we turn to history, we find that in the past, only such people have been declared to have been fit for freedom who fought for it and attained it. We are living in different times. Peace has its victories. We are fighting and can only fight constitutional battles. This peaceful struggle is not, and will not, be wanting in the quality of vigour and sacrifice, and we are determined to convince the British Empire that we are fit for the place of a partner within the Empire, and nothing less will satisfy India.

10

APPEAL FOR HARMONY AND MUTUAL GOODWILL*

Gentlemen, you assembled to conduct your deliberations under the guidance of one who was chosen by universal acclaim to preside over your deliberations this year, who is regarded as one of your true leaders, who has dedicated his life to the service of his country and his community, who has suffered much and is still suffering for his service, but who also is prevented from fulfilling the obligation you had laid upon him, an obligation which it would have been his dearest wish to fulfil. From every corner of the land and from every community, the respectful prayer—latterly taking the shape of an insistent demand—had gone forth that Mohammad Ali, the President-elect of this momentous session of our League, should be released from internment. But the Government has heeded not. I do not know whether those responsible for his continued detention fully realize the intensity of the feeling which exists among the Mohammedans on this matter. Mohammad Ali's enforced absence from the public life of the country has been a deprivation, the magnitude of which the Musalmans of India have felt with bitter poignancy, which has not been lessened by the fact that Mohammad Ali and his brother were interned and remain interned to-day without any definite charge having been formulated against them. Mohammad Ali, it seems to me, was the one man whose service in these unprecedentedly abnormal times it should have been the endeavour of the Government to utilize in every possible way. A publicist of high repute, and an able and fearless exponent of the sentiments, the grievances and aspirations of the Musalmans of India, who better could, I ask, have acted

*Presidential address delivered by the Raja of Mahmudabad at the Calcutta session held on 30 December, 1917.

as the mouthpiece and the interpreter of those sentiments than he. He mirrored and expressed in the columns of his ably conducted journals, as no one else could do or had the courage to do, with an equal degree of faithfulness and candour, what was passing in the minds of the Muslims of India. He did not hide or attempt to minimize what we Musalmans felt, nor did he think it a service to the State or to his fellow-Musalmans to lull the Government into the belief that the mind of the community was running along the lines laid down by the bureaucracy. But though he was essentially a people's man, he never forgot his responsibilities as a patriotic citizen of the British Empire, or his allegiance to his Majesty the King Emperor. Who, indeed, can forget his exhortation, unequivocal and courageous to his co-religionists in India when they were about to be overwhelmed by the misfortune of the acknowledged Khalifa and spiritual head of their largest section ranging himself on the side of the King's enemies, not to deviate a hair's breadth from the path of true loyalty ? His electrifying pledge on behalf of the Indian Musalmans is still ringing in our ears : "Whatever happens, our anchor holds."

Three fateful years have passed since those words instinct with the true fervour of a patriot were uttered; every syllable of that pledge has been redeemed by the phenomenal way in which Muslim loyalty in India has stood an almost superhuman test. Would it not have been an act of grace, let alone justice, had the Government repaid the loyalty which has been given in such full and free measure, under such distracting circumstances, by acceding to the passionate appeal of the Mohammedan community, supported as it has been by the voice of the whole of India, and releasing the Mohammedan leader who freely and fearlessly gave that pledge three years ago on behalf of the community.

The Evil of the Internment Policy

We know that anarchial designs have been hatched and unhappily anarchical outrages perpetrated by certain enemies of law and order in British India. The commission of crimes of

violence as a means to a political end is a recent development in this country. But it cannot be said that anarchism stalks the land. The overwhelming mass of the people are not only passively but actively loyal. yet when the Executive Government sought to arm itself with the weapon of the Defence of India Act—by which it invested itself with the power, as a war measure for the safety of the realm, of interning people without any trial, without any definite charge, and without any opportunity being given to them of defending themselves and proving their innocence—the support of the representatives of the people in the Council was accorded to it, though not without grave misgiving that it might be misused. How well founded were these misgivings has been made plain to the most casual observer of events by the manner in which the provisions of this Act have been applied and made use of by the Executive. Persons who could by no stretch of imagination be suspected of any offence in connection with the war, and the whole tenor of whose lives revealed only constitutional and open efforts for the public weal, have been deprived of their liberty of person, of movement and of expression. The guillotine of the Defence Act has descended with paralyzing swiftness and ruthlessness on many members of our community, not a few of whom are recognized and cherished as our trusted leaders, champions and spokesmen.

Gentlemen, do Government fully realize what these internments have done to our country ? They have not only taken away from us men whom we respected, trusted and loved. That by itself would have been a grave enough loss. The stimulation of their presence is denied to us. At this juncture in the affairs of our country and of our community, we are poorer, inestimably poorer, by being deprived of the valuable contribution which they, and most of all our President that was to be, would have made by their wise counsel, deep thought and patriotic action to our deliberations. Imagine what would have happened if the illustrious lady who is presiding at the sister political organization had remained a victim to the arbitrary exercise of the executive authority of the Government of Madras. Is it to be supposed that the people of India would have res-

ponded to the appeal of His Excelleney the Viceroy for a calm and tranquil atmosphere at the time of the visit of the Secretary of State for his great and momentous mission ? Such a thing was impossible. They could not have comforted themselves so even if they tried, for their minds would have been disturbed by the feeling of a great wrong remaining unredressed, a great worker in the public cause, an illustrious leader of public opinion being excluded from the discussions for which primarily the Secretary of State undertook the journey to India. The Government realized the incongruity, the injustice of the situation, and braving the taunts of the Anglo-Indian Press, forthwith released Mrs. A. Besant.

Exactly, such a situation, if anything perhaps grave and exciting deeper feelings, as the wrong was of longer duration, exists with regard to Mohammed Ali. I have said that Mohammad Ali is pre-eminently the most faithful interpreter of the view of the progressive section of the Musalmans of India. On the question of the impending changes in the constitution of the government of the country, in the enjoyment of full liberty as a British subject, he would have been our most able adviser, and he should have been invited by the Government to offer his full and frank opinion. This aspect of the question has been fully and publicly put before the Government by the Musalmans. The All-India Muslim League has repeatedly placed on record the demand of the Musalmans on this point. As recently as last November 15, the Muslim League, in a general meeting of its members held at Lucknow, declared: "That this meeting deplores the fact that in spite of the expression of the overwhelming sentiment of the community as indicated in the unanimous election of Mr. Mohammad Ali to the presidentship of the next session of the All-India Muslim League to be held in Calcutta in December next, both he and his brother, Mr. Shaukat Ali, have remained unreleased. The All-India Muslim League cannot too strongly urge upon the attention of the Government that the course followed by them is having a profoundly depressing and disquieting effect upon the community at large."

For almost three years the Government preserved a sphinx-like silence as to the reasons why Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali were interned. At last to the question of Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah, the ex-President of our League, they vouchsafed the reply that they were interned because they expressed and promoted sympathy with the King's enemies. The reply has for the first time brought within the cognizance of the public reasons, unsupported by any fact, which have induced Government to restrict the liberties of the two brothers. I say deliberately and emphatically that the Musalmans of India refuse to accept this condemnation of our two friends. We refuse to believe it, and we demand that, if Government have any evidence to justify that statement, let it be produced and scrutinized and submitted publicly to those tests without which no evidence is worth the name. We know our friends. Their lives have been an open book. They have worked constitutionally and above-board in the cause of their community and of India; and this grave charge, unsubstantiated by any facts, unproved by evidence impartiallly sifted, has failed to shake the confidence of the public in their innocence.

Is an expression of sympathy with Islam and Musalmans in their tribulations, in India and outside it, to be treated as an act of disloyalty to the State ? On this point, the League, in the resolution I have quoted above, says : "The League further puts on record its unswerving conviction that the views expressed by Mohammad Ali in his draft undertaking faithfully reflect the attitude of the Mohammedan community of India, his offence, if it is an offence, being that speaking the unvarnished truth, he has rendered a public service alike to the Government and his own people; further that in the considered opinion of the League the view expressed by Mr. Mohammad Ali and also the passive sympathies of the Musalmans in general with their co-religionists, all over the world, based on purely religious grounds is not in the least degree inconsistent with the fullest measure of sincere and reasoned loyalty to His Majesty the King Emperor. Lastly, the League desires to convey to the Government the profound disbelief in the charges and allegations which have been officially made against Mr.

Mohammad Ali without any attempt at substantiation, and so long as the public is not fully put in possession of the sources and the character of the information upon which the Government based their policy, it will continue to regard such action as devoid of any justification; further that the League do resolve in response to the universal wishes of the Musalmans of India to initiate a campaign of constitutional agitation to ventilate this matter, both in this country and in Great Britain, with a view to securing the release of the two brothers."

In spite of these emphatic declarations, which show that the sentiments expressed by Mr. Mohammad Ali and his brother are sentiments shared with them by the whole of Muslim India, though they are in no way inconsistent with deep and reasoned loyalty to the King Emperor—a loyalty which is being daily put to the proof on the battle fields on every front where Indian Mohammedans are sacrificing their lives for King and country as freely and as willingly as any other section of His Majesty's subjects—in spite, I say, of these declarations and these proofs, the Government has continued its policy of repression, of distrust and of suspicion. There need be little wonder, then, that a feeling of disquietude, depression and resentment prevails in the minds of Muslims. And in this condition of mind, we are asked to discuss, in an atmosphere of serenity and calmness, the prospective reforms in the constitution of the government. We are to preserve an attitude of peace and calm in the face of the greatest and the most persistent aggravation of our most deep-rooted grievance. The coping stone to this attitude of Government was laid when, in a spirit of unreasonableness hard to parallel, the Home Department of the Government of India refused to allow an All-India Deputation of Musalmans to wait on Mr. Montagu, unless the prayer for the release of Mohammad Ali and other internees was deleted.

I can hardly say that the section of the more impulsive amongst us is to be blamed when it refuses to be comforted by what is being dangled before it and exclaims with Khaiyam :

Oh take the cash, and let the credit go,
Nor heed the rumbling of a distant drum !

But much as I sympathize with this attitude, I appeal to my eager and bitterly tried friends not to give way to feelings of despondency and despair. Even those brave men who have lost their liberties for us would not wish that this spirit should get the better of us. They would wish us, I know, to continue the struggle, and work for the cause with that singleness of purpose which characterized them. The cause of the country is too great, too sacred to be forsaken through any misfortune. It is in the spirit of an unshakable devotion to our faith and our country that we have assembled here. In the clash of arms and the din of conflict, many of the old-world ideals have crumbled and vanished, but the apotheosis of patriotism, of love of country and of race has once again become an abiding and a consuming faith to millions of men, who, hither-to unmoved by any consideration except that of material gain, have made the supreme sacrifice on the altar of this faith. Gentlemen, to you this seemingly new phase of man's mentality, does not come in the nature either of a new discovery or even as a truth restored to its pristine purity. Your fidelity to your faith is a wonder to the world, and *Hubbul-Watan* (love of country) you regard as part of your faith.

I will not waste your time on the trite question of whether we are Musalmans first and Indians afterwards, or Indians first and Musalmans next; for we are both, and it does not matter in the least whether you put the one attribute first and the other afterwards or the other way about. I maintain that we are both at one and the same time, and the record of the organization to which we all are proud to belong, I mean the All-India Muslim League, is a splendid exemplification of the Indian Musalman.

To the All-India Muslim League belongs the glory of burning the great truth into the hearts of Indian Musalmans, that they must devote an equal portion of their lives for the service of the motherland as for their faith.

Muslims and the Self-Government Movement

The *rapprochement* between the two great communities of

India in matters political, of which the first fruits are seen in the Joint Scheme of Reforms which has received such gratifying support from all sections of the community, is the work of your League. How this change was brought about in the attitude of the thinking portion of the Musalmans of India is a matter of recent history and within the knowledge of most of you. The Mohammedan of the last quarter of the last century had fought shy of politics. That was not an accident. He did so under the press of circumstances and in response to the imperative promptings of self-interest. A laggard, up to that time, in the educational race, in addition to being a member of a community which was a minority in this country, he realized that his position in the body politic of the country would be that of helpless subservience if everything was decided on the basis of votes. The vision of a government of the people, for the people, by the people, which was naturally entrancing to the educated Indians who had drunk deep at the fountain of Western knowledge, and who were moreover in the happy position of belonging to the predominant community, could hardly, at the firsh blush, make the same appeal to him. He was obsessed with a minority's natural anxiety for self-preservation. While drifting in this manner, matters were made worse by the larger community's refusal to recognize the claim of the Musalmans for representation on a communal basis, and were tending to an inevitable deadlock, to which the bureaucracy, apprehensive of the loss of their power, lent powerful support. At that stage, sudden changes in the Government of England brought to power one of the most liberal of Cabinets that had up to that time ruled from Whitehall. The affairs of India were entrusted to the hands of the philospher-statesmen, Lord (then Mr.) Morley, who in conjunction with Lord Minto, decided, in keeping with the instincts, traditions and history of his freedom-loving race, to associate Indians, in a larger degree, in the Government of the country. To safeguard their interests and to put forward their claims in the new settlement, the Mohammedans in 1906 waited in deputation on His Excellency Lord Minto, and secured the definite concession of the right of separate representation in the Legislative Councils, both Provincial and Imperial, to the Musalmans of India.

It was thus that the Indian Mohammedan was drawn into the vortex of politics, and under these circumstances, the Muslim League came into being. But the League was mainly a defensive body, which primarily, though not exclusively, concerned itself with advancing the interests of the community it represented. A band of young men now began to assert themselves in communal affairs. Though their devotion to the faith was intense, their outlook was broader and their patriotism higher. Mr. Mohammad Ali and Mr. Wazir Hasan were among these workers, and it was Syed Wazir Hasan who in 1913 introduced in the draft of the Constitution of the League the now famous ideal of 'self-government suitable to India under the aegis of the British Crown'. The League now admittedly stood on a higher plane of patriotism than it occupied before, and the energy and the zeal that were infused into it succeeded in awakening, among Musalmans, a new life of aim and endeavour. Thenceforth the League's career was one of independent and fearless advocacy of Mohammedan and national causes. The manner in which your organization represented feelings during the period of the Tripolitan and the Balkan wars, at the time of the sacrilege of the shrine at Mashhed, the honourable part it played in the crises created by the Cawnpore (Kanpur) mosque affair, coupled more recently with its truly statesmanlike action in taking the initiative in acquainting the Government with the current of Mohammedan feelings with regard to the question of the Caliphate, brought into inopportune prominence by the dastardly attacks made upon it by certain English and Anglo-Indian papers at the time of the revolt of the Shareef of Mecca, are chapters in its history of which the All-India Muslim League may well be proud. The crown of the efforts of the League is admittedly the Scheme of Reforms which, in conjunction with the Indian National Congress, it has presented to the country and the Government. The immediate conferment of this constitution after the war will be regarded by the country as a first step towards that complete responsible government which it is the declared aim of the British Government that India should attain. In the bog of addresses and interviews with which the Secretary of State, Mr. Montagu, and Lord Chelms-

'ord are at present surrounded, one fact emerges sharp and distinct : it is the practical unanimity of this demand, from all classes and conditions of men, for the reform, without any delay, of the government of the country on the lines indicated in the Joint Scheme.

The Congress-League Scheme

It was under your mandate in 1915 that the Scheme was prepared. The best talent of your community was engaged on this work; careful thought and vigilant efforts were brought to bear on it to make the Scheme not only comprehensive but—and here your representatives were confronted with the most difficult and delicate task—to get those safeguards accepted, by the Committee of the Indian National Congress, which were considered essential in the interests of the Musalman of India The principle of separate and adequate representation of the Musalmans was, for the first time in the history of the Indian National Congress, acknowledged and incorporated; and there is a further safeguard—the far reaching effects of which cannot be exaggerated—in the Scheme. It provides "that no Bill nor any clause thereof, nor a resolution introduced by a non-official member affecting one or the other community, which question is to be determined by the members of that community in the Legislative Council concerned, shall be proceeded with if three-fourths of the members of that community, in the particular Council, Imperial or Provincial, oppose the Bill, or any clauses thereof, or the resolution."

Gentlemen, in your behalf, I affirm here our complete adherence to that Scheme, which is the irreducible minimum of our demands. Here I may say that the bed-rock of our demands in relation to our communal interests is as firm to-day as it was in 1906. And therefore in any scheme of constitutional reforms in the government of this country, this cardinal fact should not, in our opinion, be lost sight of.

The separate representation of the Indian Musalmans in the Legislative Council, has admittedly been conducive to

better relations between the two communities of India. It has contributed to the contentment of Mohammedans inasmuch as it has softened, if not altogether eliminated, the galling sense of unmerited importance in influencing Indian policy from the minds of the community, which by reason of its number, its position and its importance, felt that it could not justifiably resign itself to the inevitable lot of a hopeless and therefore dejected minority.

Communal representation is not an innovation introduced in the constitution of India only. Representation on a territorial basis is, we recognize, the general rule; but in the British Empire, embracing as it does, world-wide, divergent and not always easily reconcilable interests and elements, the experiment of communal representation has been tried with success, as for instance, in Cyprus, long before it was introduced in the Constitutions of this country. The recognition of this principle by the predominant community in India is an index of their desire for the equitable handling of inter-communal problems, and has made it possible for a joint scheme to be presented with the support of both the communities.

The steady advance of the government of the country on democratic lines, its increased deference to the will of the people as expressed through their chosen representatives, under whose control the government should ultimately be, is the basis on which this constitution is framed. The British nation is expending its blood and treasure with such profusion and generosity in order that the world may be 'made safe for democracy'. Shall then the mockery continue that, while India—with the other component parts of the Empire, which, by the way, are all democratic and self-governing—is fighting for this ideal, the form of government under which she is ruled remains despotic, however, benevolent ? It is a slur on the fair name of freedom-loving England, and I believe, repugnant to the instincts of the great nation with which the destinies of this ancient land are bound up.

We demand that by reason of India's advancement in educa-

tion, economic and industrial progress, political capacity, and above all her inalienable right to full and unfettered development and as an over-delayed act of political equity and justice, the Government of Great Britain shall make definite announcement of the period during which full and complete responsible government shall be conferred on India. Other countries that had neither the ordered and settled and scientifically efficient government, nor enjoyed such immunity from internal disorder or external menace as India, have attained the ideal which for our country is still a pious aspiration. As a first and a very short step towards this goal, we demand that immediately after the conclusion of the war, the Constitution as embodied in the Joint Scheme, shall be granted.

The spirit of self-realization which is at present moving mankind in such a tremendously ominous manner has not left India untouched. She is also possessed with it, and why should she not be possessed with the spirit ? Why should she not aspire to rise to her full stature ? But the scheme for which we ask is not extravagantly ambitious It is not Utopian. Existing conditions have been taken into account and safeguards against our inexperience have been provided.

I may offer some observations in connection with portions of it. I believe that the abolition of the Councli of the Secretary of State for India is essential. The Secretary of State for India should not have a higher, a more powerful, or different position than the Secretary of State for the Colonies. He should, however, be assisted with one Assistant Secretary and two Under-Secretaries, two of whom should be Indians, to bring before him the Indian point of view. The greater portion of the powers of the Secretary of State should be transferred to Parliament. Our aim is autonomy, and the Viceroys should no longer be the agents of the Secretary of State for India. The Executive Council should more and more approximate to the Cabinet of Ministers, members retaining their seats in the last resort by the suffrage of the people, and with this end in view, the power of nominating members of his Executive Council should be taken away from the Viceroy.

Instead of the present system, members of the Executive Council of the Viceroy should be elected by the members of the Legislature, or at least, to begin with, as a first step towards that consummation, the Legislative Council should be given the right of nominating four members out of themselves, two of whom the Viceroy should select for the membership of his Council. I have yet another alternative scheme to suggest. The Vice-President of the Council should be a Minister without portfolio. His position should be analogous to that of the Premier, and to him should be given the powers of selecting all the members of the Executive Council, official and non-official. To make him a representative of the people, at least by sympathy, if not by election, the Vice-President should always be an Indian.

The official members of the Legislative Council should no longer be a machinery for voting under Government direction. They should be there as representatives of departments and provinces. The official nominated element in the Councils should be one-fifth of the total strength of the Council.

I may say that I am in favour of the proposal, according to which, if a measure is passed by the Council with which the Viceroy is not in agreement, he shall have the power first to send it back for the reconsideration of the Council, and if it does not change its decision, then to dissolve it and order a fresh election. If the newly elected Council again passes that measure, then the Viceroy will be bound by the constitution to give his assent to it.

The first item in the programme of the Council which I have outlined should be the introduction of free and compulsory primary education. This reform, for which the late lamented Mr. Gokhale devoted his energies in the later part of his life, has long been overdue. Is it not a reproach to Government, no less than to those who are working for the uplift of this country, that it should be absent from the educational organization of the country, at nearly the end of the first quarter of the 20th century ?

Public Service Commission Report

Before I pass to other subjects, I may refer to the keen disappointment with which the whole country has received the majority report of the Royal Commission on the Public Service of India. As has been observed by Mr. Kunzru in his admirable criticism of the Report, "The question of the extensive employment of Indians in the higher ranks of the Public Services is not merely one of providing honourable careers for the youth of India. The exclusion of the children of the soil from all positions of power and dignity would be a legitimate grievance even if the effect of the injustice were confined to a few individuals, but the injury to individual interests pales into insignificance by the side of the wrong done to the whole nation. Our vital interests are bound up with the proper solution of this question, which is at once moral, political and economic. It affects our manhood. It involves our national self-respect, it is also a test of England's good faith. If she is mindful of her moral responsibilities, if her dominion in India is not to be synonymous with the exploitation of a helpless people, if the Act of 1833 and the Proclamation of 1858 are not mere scraps of paper, it is her bounden duty to raise Indians to positions of trust and responsibility, and to make them feel that they are not treated as helots in their own country.

But after a considerable expenditure of public money and raising hopes in the public mind, the commission has perpetuated, with minor modifications which hardly affect the position, the inequities, the disabilities, the injustices on which the whole system of recruiting and manning the higher branches of the Public Services in India is built up.

The agency which is entrusted with the prevention and detection of crime still possesses the power to award punishment. The incubus of an agency, alien and therefore unsympathetic, devoid of understanding and unadaptable to Indian needs, still sits on the education of the country. Equality of opportunity in competing for the premier service in India is still denied to the youth of the country; and the declaration, humiliating to the whole of India, is still made that race, an l

not fitness and ability, is the criterion for filling up positions of responsibility in the administration, while the excuse is advanced that the British character of the administration should be maintained. Cannot Indians with British education maintain that character ?

The whole country is under a great obligation to that distinguished son of India, Mr. Justice Abdur Rahim, who in his capacity as a member of the Commission did not forget the claims of the sons of this country to their birth-right of an equal, aye, a predominant, share in her governance and administration. The Note of Dissent signed by him represents the views of the whole of educated India, Mohammedan and Hindu, on this question; and the dissatisfaction of the country can only be removed if they are adopted in their entirety.

To the non-Muslim mind, the Muslim brotherhood, which scorns the barriers of race, of clime or territory, is an incomprehensible phenomenon; but it is, all the same, a living force and an adamantine fact. And want of understanding and appreciation of this fact is responsible for half the complications with which British statesmanship perennially finds itself face to face in relation to Islam. How often has the Muslim mind in India been lacerated by the ignorance of and, let us hope unconscious, want of respect for Islamic convictions which responsible British statesmen betray at the most critical period of international affairs.

The Question of the Caliphate

The question of the Caliphate is, for example, one which, now when Islam is already on the *qui vive*, has been recently treated in a flippant manner by men in authority, who ought to know, and by influential organs of public opinion, which ought to be taught better. It is not a shuttle-cock for European diplomacy to play with. It is a question which has got its seat in the very fibre of the faith of a vast majority of the Mohammedans of the world, no less than of India. They are greatly mistaken who think that any interference or dictation in this matter will not be resented by the Musalmans.

Gentlemen, the disintegration of Mohammedan countries is going on apace. Countries, every inch of which is sacred to the Musalmans, have been made battlegrounds in consequence of this world conflagration. The announcement which the Government of His Majesty and His Majesty's representative in India made at the beginning of this war, and which has contributed to an enormous degree to the self-control of the Indian Musalmans, is not forgotten. It assured them of the inviolability and the integrity of the Muslim sacred places and of their immunity from attack—Jerusalem is one of those sacred places.

Vision of a United India

Gentlemen, how do we stand in relation to the other communities in India ? Our points of contact are so many and so important; but our points of difference are not few. And the energies of the best minds of the two great communities of India are concentrated on the problem of how to smooth these differences and pave the way for greater harmony, toleration and mutual goodwill. They had almost succeeded when the outrages in Arrah and other places in Bihar and in other parts of India came as a rude shock, and have caused consternation in the ranks of well-wishers of the country, and joy to its enemies.

It would be folly to shut our eyes to the fact that these events reveal that forces inimical to real progress are not yet subdued, that the danger of the elements of disruption overwhelming and sweeping away the foundations of the Indian nation are still considerable.

Is the vision of a United India in which the nation-builders of both the communities are indulging so rapturously to be shattered for ever, and the labours of Indian patriots to be mercilessly stultified ?

I call upon my Hindu compatriots not to treat the problem in a light-hearted manner or try to gloss over facts.

If all the recent attempts at co-operation are not to result

in dismal failure, it behoves them and us to tackle the problems of *Moharram*, *Dasehra* and *Baqrid* with real earnestness of purpose.

What force otherwise will our demand to the Government possess ?

Gentlemen, our need now is the consolidation of the ground which workers in the cause of the political regeneration of India have, as the Hon. Mr. Jinnah so eloguently pointed out last year, constitutionally won yard by yard and inch by inch. Do not rest but continue to advance.

The citadels of reaction both official and communal, have not yet been stormed. Join your forces and with a stout heart attack them.

11

PROPOSALS FOR CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS*

What has called us here together, the President said, is, as you know, the Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms which His Excellency Lord Chelmsford and the Right Honourable E.S. Montagu have presented to His Majesty's Government and on which criticism is invited; and as the recognized conduit of progressive Mohammedan opinion, it is the duty of the All-India Muslim League to give expression to its considered judgment on it.

The Report and the memorable announcement of British policy of the August 20, 1917, with regard to India, as a corollary of which the Report is published, have not come a minute too soon. The world-forces which are changing the mental and moral outlook of the human race, have not left India untouched or unaffected. It is not a mere idle fancy to say that unfathomed depths of Indian thought and feeling have been stirred; what is seen is not merely ripples on the surface. That more than a million sons of this ancient land have gone voluntarily to the shambles of Flanders, France and the other theatres of war, to fight the battle of England, is due to the realization by India that the British Empire has not entered this grim struggle lightly, or with an ambition to seize territory and subjugate people, but to vindicate right and justice and freedom. She saw that England drew her sword to defend the right of small nations to determine their own fate, and to live their lives unmolested by stronger and unscrupulous neighbours. I do not say that every man who has enlisted in India since the war broke

*Indirect version of the Presidential address delivered by the Raja of Mahmudabad at theSpecial Session of the League held at Bombay on 31st August—1st September, 1918.

out has done so after a severe process of reasoning respecting the rights and wrongs of the war. No, manifestly not. But the national mind has instinctively felt the justice of England's cause. The Indian's homage to moral grandeur, wherever and whenever he finds it, is immeasurable. Service, complete and unstinted, to spiritual ideals is his creed from time immemorial, and he has lived up to it. Self-mortification, nay, self-immolation, is his willing offering at that altar. And it was thus that there was a stir in the placid life of this country hoary with age; a stir, not to take advantage of the troubles in which England found herself, but to run to her side and render whatever help India was capable of. An uninterrupted stream of men—increasing as the years of war have rolled on—of all classes, from the prince to the peasant, has found its way to where the principles for which England had taken up arms were being fought out, not to watch the struggle in a spirit of unconcerned detachment, but to take part in it, and if need be, give up their lives for those principles. But at the same time, the question was as irresistible as it was natural, as to whether the principles in defence of which, and on account of the violation of which, the Empire was draining its life-blood, were or were not being applied nearer home; and whether it was a fact that in certain portions of the Empire, the right of the people themselves to manage the affairs of their country was not yet conceded.

People's Primary Right

It was not the war which brought this reflection to them. For years past, that section of the people of India which the Report calls the 'intelligentsia' has been crying itself hoarse over the denial of what it considers the primary and inalienable right of every people, most of all of people who belong to that commonwealth of nations called the British Empire—viz., to have a predominant voice and share in the government of their own country. The utmost that can be said is that the war and the justification of our participation in it gave point to India's national demand; "it came with the accumulated force of year's discontent." What would have been the result of

further delay in grappling with the grave problem of Indian discontent, it is not pleasant to think of; but the conditions of 1906 and 1907, which no lover of India wishes to see revived, threatened to make their appearance again, only in a form which, because it was constitutional, was not less formidable than the other. What I mean is that the party of constitutional progress, the party that put its faith in ordered and peaceful advance was getting impatient and despondent. Hope deferred makes the heart sick, and it was hardly a matter for surprise that the best minds of the country who never lost hope, even when the prospect was most dismal, were at last succumbing to despair.

In spite of the palliatives applied by the Minto-Morley Reforms, the conditions did not improve much. Partial satisfaction there was, but it soon became evident that the remedies were not potent enough to eradicate the maladies in the body politic. We come now to the next stage of the development of the Indian situation. I have already referred to the declaration of policy made by his Majesty's Government in regard to India's constitutional goal. Following upon that, as you are aware, the unprecedented visit to India of the Secretary of State took place, in order to enable him personally to study and investigate the problem, and consult all shades of opinion in reference to it. The results of that investigation are embodied in the Report, to pronounce upon which you have assembled on this occasion. The Report, gentlemen, is a monument of industry and political acumen. We may not agree with all its conclusions, but we cannot fail to be impressed by it. The sinister shadow of Mr. Curtis, however, sits athwart the Report. What Mr. Srinivas Sastri very aptly calls the pedagogic tenets of Mr. Curtis seem to have exercised an influence on the distinguished authors of the Report out of all proportion to their merits. But for the gratuitous entry of this gentlemen into the politics of India, what chance of acceptance the National Scheme evolved by the joint labours of the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League would have had is an interesting, though now an unfruitful, speculation. It has never been claimed for the Scheme that it was complete in the formulation of the

details of its proposals, or that it was a model of draftsmanship. But any one reading it with care could not fail to discover that it rested upon and embodied certain vital principles. These principles, so far from being anything new or at variance with the moral instincts of the British Nation or with the trend and teaching of British history, were but a reaffirmation by the people of India of what British sovereigns in succession, and the British nation through its most illustrious statesmen, had repeatedly declared to be their aim with regard to the great Dependency—as it had hitherto been called—of India.

Counter-Proposals

Proceeding, the President recalled some of these declarations, and, continuing, said the history of India's connection with England being replete with such declarations, proclamations and assurance, it was natural that in the British House of Commons, the greatest of free and democratic institutions, the announcement of August 20 was made. Buoyed up by such assurance as he had cited and having an unextinguishable faith in the cause, a cause which they believed would further cement the connection of India with England, broad-basing it on a people's willing allegiance, the representatives of the Indian people, through their national assemblies, evolved a scheme, which taking into consideration the existing circumstances in India, they thought would be the most suitable beginning of a regime in which the principles enunciated, over and over again in Parliament and outside, with regard to the governance of this country, would have a chance of gradual but progressive application.

The President then proceeded to refer to the fundamental principles of the Congress-League Scheme, the criticisms passed on it in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report and the counter-proposals.

Speaking of the latter the Raja of Mahmudabad said: Instead of the scheme of reforms which the All-India Muslim League, in collaboration with the sister organization, the Indian National Congress, presented the country and the Government

for their acceptance, the Report issued over the signatures of His Excellency Lord Chelmsford and the Right Honourable E.S. Montagu, after making an exhaustive survey of the political situation, and taking note of the different complicated problems which the conditions in India give rise to, makes counter proposals with regard to the constitutional reforms which they think ought, in pursuance of the policy enunciated in the announcement of August 23, to be introduced in the government of this country forthwith. The announcement having been made, the vision was now clear, and the goal definitely fixed, which His Majesty's Govenment definitely—and we trust irrevocably—pledged itself to help India to reach. The announcement naturally raised high hopes in the minds of those Indians who already regarded the principles enunciated in it as the articles of their political creed, and when simultaneously with the announcement, it was further announced that accepting the invitation of His Excellency the Viceroy, the Secretary of State would proceed to investigate the subject, on the spot, in order to formulate proposals to give effect to what the announcement intended, the Indian patriots began to feel that the era for the inauguration of which they had been striving was drawing perceptibly nearer. The publication of the Report, as a result of this visit and of the enquiry..., has plunged the whole country into a state of intense excitement. It has stimulated thought and provoked keen controversy. The question is being hotly debated as to whether it should be accepted by the country or not ; whether or not the proposals it contains satisfy the aspirations and the expectations raised by the announcement itself, whether, in one word, they constitute a substantial step towards the realization of responsible government ? That they have caused disappointment in our minds, cannot and need not be denied. They have fallen short of natural and legitimate expectations. What now is the remedy ?

Three Basic Formulas

The proposals are built upon the foundation of three formulas, which have been stated thus : (i) "There should be, as far as possible, complete popular control in local bodies

and the largest possible independence for them of outside control." (ii) "The provinces are the domain in which the earlier steps towards the progressive realization of responsible government should be taken. Some measure of responsibility should be given at once, and our aim is to give complete responsibility as soon as conditions permit. This involves at once giving the provinces, the largest measure of independence, administrative and financial, of the Government of India, which is compatible with the due discharge by the latter of its own responsibilities." (iii) "The Government of India must remain wholly responsible to Parliament and saving such responsibility, its authority in esssential matters must remain indisputable, pending experience of the effect of the changes now to be introduced in the provinces. In the meantime the Indian Legislative Council should be enlarged and made more representative and its opportunities of influencing Government increased."

These formulas and the qualifying phrases and sentences implying distrust of the capacity of the people, with which the announcement of August 20 is hedged, tend to mar the undoubted *bona fides* of the actual proposals. The formulas which I have just quoted, and specially the manner in which they have been evolved and given shape in the concrete proposals put forward, make the Government of India practically unamenable to the influence of the representatives of the people. In fact, the cumulative effect of the proposal seems to me, if anything, to take the Government farther away than now from the orbit of such influence.

Council of State

The institution of the Council of State and the consequent relegation of the Legislative Assembly to a position of secondary importance, the humiliating provision that bills rejected by the Legislative Assembly may be referred *de novo* to the Council of State and passed there; and worse still the reservation of the power of introducing a bill in the first instance in, and of passing it through, the Council of State alone, merely reporting it to the Assembly, all point in one direction, viz., to make the voice of the people important in the Government of India. I

have no quarrel with the dictum of the Report. "In all matters which it (the Government of India) judges to be essential to the discharge of its responsibilities for peace, order and good government, it must, saving only for its accountability to Parliament, retain indisputable power." So it must; but there is no reason why, with the retention of that indispensable power on a secure basis, opportunities to the people of the country for influencing the Government in other matters of vital importance should not be more extended and definite. No definition has been given as to what will be the boundary line of responsibility for peace, order and good government; and when the definition is left undetermined, as it has been in the Reforms Report, it is conceivable that the domain of things and of actions considered necessary by Government for peace, order and good government, may become co-extensive with the personal predilections and even idiosyncracies of the Executive. It is necessary in my opinion that the boundaries should be well defined as to what matters ordinarily relate to peace, order and good government. Responsibility to the electorate, an element of which is introduced in the Provincial Government, is entirely absent in the constitution of the Central and Supreme Government It is only accountable to Parliament and the Secretary of State. That, I submit, is not the right way to prepare us for full and complete responsible government at a later stage. In the Government of India also, though in a more circumscribed area than in the Provincial government, the principle of responsibility should have full sway. This brings me, gentlemen, to the novel method in which responsibility is sought to be introduced by the distinguished authors of the Report. In the Provincial Government, where alone the system is to come into vogue, a system of dual government is set up. Departments of government will be divided into those dealing with reserved and those dealing with transferred subjects. Transferred subjects will be administered by ministers selected from among the members of the Legislative Council and they will be responsible to it. They will be removable by the Council inasmuch as their lease of official life will be co-terminal with that of the Council itself, of which they will be a member. They will be dependent for

administration of their department on the votes of supplies which they may get from the Council or from fresh taxation which they may persuade the Council to impose for specific benefit of those transferred subjects. The reserved subjects will, on the other hand, be in the happy position of having their financial requirements attended to first to the extent that the Executive Government may demand; and the Legislature is debarred from having and determining voice in the matter.

Harmony Menaced

In so far as this makes a portion of the administration amenable to popular control, the proposal is to be welcomed. But the bifurcation of Government will not lead to that harmonious working for which the authors are so anxious. This duality of government has in recent history been in operation in Egypt in pre-protectorate days, and Lord Cromer's *Modern Egypt* bears witness to the difficulties and sometimes quite intolerable situation which it gave rise to. It was due to this anomalous combination that the prestige of the Government, of which he was at once a symbol and an agent, overcame such difficulties, and tided over the situations. It may be said in reply that there were two governments, foreign, the dominant, and native, the subservient, ruling side by side, and it was due to this anomalous combination that the difficulties owed their origin. This is true; so will it be true of the government set up in the form of administrations of reserved and transferred subjects. The prestige of the reserved departments will make transferred departments feel small in their own estimation. I cannot but fear, as has been suggested, "the one government will be regarded as official and the other as Indian"; and although the proposals say that all orders relating to reserved and transferred subjects would be the orders of one government, it is not difficult to foresee that the subordinate officials would very soon decide as to what orders required prompt and thorough obedience, and what could be complied with at leisure. There is historical precedent for this view. When the East India Company took over the Divani from the Nawab Nazim of Bengal—although it professed to have have acquired nothing more, in fact, the Executive of the Nizamat came, in

time, to be subordinated in the public mind, to the administrators of the Divani. This may be described as an earlier example of dubious dualism in Government. The administration of transferred subjects will therefore, in my opinion, start with a great handicap; a handicap which, I submit, cannot be fairly placed on it, and which it should be our aim to remove as soon as possible. But if the system with its attendant defects and dangers is considered necessary as a training school in the art of responsible government for the ministers and Legislative Assembly alike, I accept it—I accept it not for any inherent or intrinsic merit of which I see it possessed, but because I think that this proposal for experimental purposes may be accepted in its principle.

Reasons for Bifurcation

The main reason—in fact the only reason—for the suggested bifurcation of Government which has been advanced is the necessity of keeping authority unimpaired in the experienced hands of the Executive Government for maintaining peace, order and good government. The principle being conceded, the Government should act up to its own professions. It should reserve only those subjects which are absolutely necessary for peace, order and good government. Moreover, the distinction should conscientiously be abandoned when its experimental purpose has been served. The period should not extend beyond five years, according to all reasonable calculation, and therefore provision to that effect should be made in the statute. The illustrative List No. 22, showing transferred subjects, any, some, or all of which may be transferred to the provinces, according to the capacity which the different provinces may be adjudged to possess, is not required. What is required is a list of subjects which it is intended to reserve, not at random, but in their indisputable indispensability to peace, order and good government. In this connection, and here it would be proper if I draw your attention to an ominous passage in the Report. It says : "What we have to do is at once to encourage and to regulate this process. After five years' time from the first meeting of the reformed councils, we suggest that the Government of India should hear applications from either the

provincial government or the provincial council for the modification of the reserved and transferred lists of the province, and that after considering the evidence laid before them, they should recommend for the approval of the Secretary of State the transfer of such further subjects to the transferred list as they think desirable. On the other hand, if it should be made plain to them that certain functions have been seriously maladministered, it will be open to them, with the sanction of the Secretary of State, to retransfer subjects from the transferred to the reserved list or to place restrictions for the future on the minister's power in respect of certain transferred subjects". Do you realize, gentlemen, what an interminal vista of accusations and allegations against the Indian people this opens up for those—and their number is not negligible yet—to whom the thought of any transference of power to the Indian people is anathema.

Future Opposition Feared

Anglo-India and reactionary India, it is idle to disguise, will not fail, at the end of five years after the meeting of the reformed Council, to bring charges of serious maladministration with regard to the transferred subjects. The close of the fifth year would be a signal for the revival of racial bitterness The flood-gates of charges regarding the Indians' want of capacity and their ineptitude will be opened. The doctrine of transmigration, and not of evolution, will thus be applied to the political constitution of India and there will always be the danger of a transferred subject 'reeling back into' the reserved subject. It is not an exaggerated year. I can foresee what frantic efforts will be made, both here and in England, to have those subjects retransferred to the reserved list. What will be the result ? The cycle will not end and the process will never be complete—"of adding to the transferred subjects and of taking away from the reserved ones, until such time as with the entire disappearance of the reserved subjects the need for an official element in the Government procedure in the Grand Committee vanishes and the goal of complete responsibility is attained in the provinces". The proposals with regard to the autonomy of the provinces in

fiscal matters are satisfactory as far as they go. The provinces will no longer be in the position of collectors of their own revenue for the purpose of handing it over to the Government of India, and to beg for whatever dues the latter may be pleased to give out of its abundance, to enable the provinces to eke out an existence. The freedom to impose fresh taxation is accompanied by the freedom to utilise the revenue derived from those taxes for provincial purposes; this is an act of overdelayed justice. But it has come after all; and the provinces will no longer be starved as they have been so far. One caveat the Government of India have made: "Emergencies may arise which cannot be provided for by immediately raising Government of India taxation, in that case it must be open to the Central Government to make a special supplementary levy upon the provinces." The Report, after considering the advantages and disadvantages of the bicameral system of government, comes to the conclusion, and I think rightly, that the system should not be introduced here. "We apprehend", says the Report, "that a second chamber representing mainly landed and moneyed interests might prove too effective a barrier against legislation which affected such interests. Again, the presence of large landed proprietors in the second chamber might have the unfortunate result of discouraging other members of the same class from seeking the votes of the electorate. We think that the delay involved in passing legislation through two houses will make the system far too cumbrous to contemplate for the business of provincial legislation. We have decided for the present therefore against bicameral institutions for the provinces." After such a lucid exposition of reasons against the system, one would have thought that one had heard the last of it, but it makes its appearance all the same in the Provincial Constitution. What are Grand Committees, if not second chambers in essence ? In spirit and in origin they may be regarded as a diluted form of the second chamber.

Second Chambers Harmful

I unhestitatingly declare that in the proposed Constitution, where the government have been subjected to such a restricted

and partial, in fact illusory popular control, these second chambers, by whatever name you may call them, are not merely superfluities, they are positively harmful. I have already shown that I regard the Council of State as an innovation which would make the Government of India even less amenable to the influence of the representatives of the people of the country than it is now, and, therefore, gentlemen, we must urge for its removal from the proposed Constitution. I note with satisfaction that in the Executive Councils the Indian element is to be increased; but our demand that the Indian element introduced in the council should be truly representative has not been acceded to. The cogency of arguments which the distinguished authors in the Report advance in support of their inability to satisfy this demand must be admitted and, therefore, we should not just at present press for the modification of the Report in that respect. But we should insist that in the Executive Councils, the Cabinets of the Government, the Indian element should be increased; they should be half and half. It will comprise representatives of the people by sympathy of sentiment and identity of interest which is the next best thing to representatives by direct election. One great matter which constitutes the basis of the whole structure has been left to be settled later on. I refer, gentlemen, to the electorates that are to come into existence. They will be the motive power of the whole machinery, and yet the determination of their composition and the qualifications which will be demanded of them has been left to the discretion of a committee to be called hereafter to institute enquiries and make recommendations. These recommendations should have emanated from the distinguished signatories to the Report—they would have had on them the impress of two great and penetrating minds. What will happen now? The whole question of the capacity of the people will be re-opened. Associations and individuals who have not reconciled themselves to the main principle of the declaration of August 20th—and who are otherwise known to be hostile to Indian progress—will start their campaign afresh against the grant of any extended franchise to the people. And it is unfortunate that they will get many weapons from the armoury of the Report itself.

Shortcomings Exaggerated

The picture as presented in the chapter on 'The Indian Conditions of the Problem', for instance, may in its main outlines, be faithful to the lineaments of the original, but as has been pointed out, the blemishes have been given an undue prominence, "the circumstances which go against the introduction of responsible government have been given an exaggerated value and those that are in favour of it have been underestimated or ignored." The absence of education, the differences of religion, race and caste, the ignorance of the masses of the people, their distressful poverty—far beyond the standards of Europe—the alleged want of political capacity of the rural population, are all paraded forward and backward and side-way to prove that it is problematical whether people so circumstanced are capable of properly exercising the power of voting. Yet it may be confessed, more in sorrow than in shame, that not a few of the conditions mentioned are not of our creating. We have been pointing to them insistently for a long time and offering suggestions with a view to their amelioration, but unfortunately, as in other matters, they have fallen on deaf ears. I have of course no wish to minimize our own responsibility for the prevailing condition of things in India. For much of the religious differences, for instance, that exist we ourselves are to blame. There may be official who in pursuit of the well-known principle of "divide and rule" would wish to see the perpetuation of these differences; but whose is the fault if we make ourselves not only willing but eager tools in their hands ? What efforts I am taking of sincere and not simulated efforts——have we made to obliterate those cleavages of which the report speaks, "the cleavages of religion, race and caste which constantly threaten its (Indian society's) solidarity and of which any wise political scheme must take serious heed." Social aloofness and separation are not fostered by Government. For this we are to a greater degree than we wish to admit responsible. The fact that these differences do not appear to soften down is due, however, I am firmly convinced, to the absence of one factor from the life of the masses of India. It is that, apart from the spiritual temperament which keeps the Indian immersed in religious preoccupation, there is also the lack of

any other equally engrossing interests in life. Next to religion, politics dominates the minds of men in other places. But the average Indian has been given little opportunity or encouragement to take a healthy and active interest in the affairs of his own country. Politics to him is taboo. And indeed, it could hardly have been otherwise with a system of administration so central and bureaucratic in character, and paternal in its professions, as the one that obtains in India. The consequence is that religion mainly colours the texture of his life.

Views on the Franchise

The President then dealt with that section of the Report which dealt with the condition of the masses. Giving the views on the franchise he said : Apart from the historical validity of the official argument, however, it is our duty now, gentlemen, to put on record our views on the subject of franchise instead of waiting for the initiation of enquiries by the Committee which is going to be appointed for the purpose. It may be stated broadly that the present condition of the people in respect of education and training in politics should not be made an excuse for disqualifying a considerable number of them from enjoying that privilege. The electorate must be sufficiently broad-based to include all those who can be expected to be capable of using the vote in an ordinarily intelligent manner. Manhood suffrage is neither demanded nor is feasible, but literacy and possession of some property may well be recognized as qualifications for the franchise. As regards the public services of the country, it is gratifying that Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu do not stop at the recommendations of the Public Services Commission of 1912, but make more equitable and more generous recommendations. They have recommended, among other things, the removal from the regulations of the remaining distinctions that are based on race, and the throwing open of all appointments in all branches of the Public Service without racial discrimination. They have also recommended that in the Indian Civil Service the proportion of recruitment in India be 33 per cent of the superior posts, increasing by 1-1/2 per cent annually. I think the percentage, though an advance on what the Public

Services Commission recomended is not quite adequate. The ethics of the question of the larger employment of Indians in the administration cannot be discussed at length here, but one point may be mentioned. Among many reasons which have been advanced on every occasion (when the question has been debated) against the admission of Indians in any considerable number to the superior grades of the service, one that has been put forward is that the British character of the Indian public services will be adversely affected. I refuse to admit that proposition. Among the lessons of the war there is a striking demonstration of the fallacy of that assumption. Owing to the exigencies of the war, as is well known, many Indian services, notably the Indian Civil Services and the Police, have been depleted of their English personnel, and Indians in the provincial services are being put in charge of positions which they could not formerly hope to reach. Many districts are now almost entirely manned by Indians. The Police, the Judicial and even the Executive charge of some districts are now in their hands. Has the character of the administration become un-British? No, on the contrary, the administration has gained by being brought more in touch with the people.

Pay of Public Services

Before leaving the subjects of the Public Services, I should like to point out that the proposals still further to increase the pay of the European members of the Civil Service, which is already the best paid service in the world, will make the cost of the administration disproportionately heavy; and considering the poverty of the country, we should not impose a heavier strain on it. The demand for making the King's Commission available to Indians has at last been conceded, but the proposals in the Report are not commensurate either with the requirements of the situation or even with the necessities of the hour. India is no longer isolated. It is in the vortex of international strifes, ambitions and struggles. The menace to her is not chimerical, we have been told on the highest authority that it is very real. India has been asked and she is straining every nerve to put forth her greatest effort in supplying men, money

and material for the needs of the Empire, and the defence of her own borders. She is supylying men not in thousands, but in hundreds of thousands; would it not be an inspiring sight if these men were to be led to battle by officers of their own race as are the Canadians, the New Zealanders and even the South Africans ? Why this mistrust, even at this supreme moment of trial ? The rally of India to the flag has been nothing short of phenomenal. At a critical time of war, the contingent from India turned the scales, and we are thankful to Lord Hardinge for having given India an opportunity to prove her mettle. Let her be given a national army, officered by her own sons, let her people have the right to bear arms, and then she may face with equanimity any menace to her safety.

Fiscal Autonomy

Gentlemen, no real beginning towards a self-governing India can be made until fiscal autonomy is included in the first instalment of reforms. No nation can make any progress without it; and to my mind, it is the very life-breath of the industrial renaissance of which India stands so much in need. The policy of free trade might have made England what it is, but the principles which will bring economic salvation to India, we are firmly convinced, are not the principles of Adam Smith and his school. The world has travelled very much farther since his days. Protection and bounties and discriminating tariffs, which were not the gods worshipped by the political economists of the Victorian age, have been now enshrined even in that country. In the economic reconstruction of the Empire after the war, the problems of which are now being considered, the voice of the free trader is no longer heard to any effect. England is committted to a policy of preference. One thing is clear, the belligerent Powers of to-day will not enter into any economic peace on pre-war terms. Even after they have sheathed their swords and resumed political relations, there will probably be an Allied Zollverein. India is not alone in her repudiation of free trade. The Central Powers, Austria-Hungary and Germany, rejected that principle. They built up their huge indus-

tries, their marvellous trade, and captured the markets of the world by a systematic application of the principles of protection, and encouragement of industries by State subsidies and bounties. Japan, the primitive backward Asiatic country of 40 years ago, did the same. To-day she is a highly industrialized State, and her people are rich and prosperous. India has been the dumping ground of foreign manufactures of every country in the world. She had no industries to speak of her own, and was dependent on imports for even the smallest article of everyday use. Her function has been to supply raw materials of every kind, and get them back in the shape of manufactured articles and contribute to the prosperity of those countries which thus sent out their commodities to her.

An Opportunity Missed

Following the outbreak of the war, Germany and Austria were automatically excluded from Indian markets and imports from other belligerent countries, too, were restricted. Here was a splendid opportunity to revive and improve her industries; but, unfortunately, we had neither state subsidies nor protective tariffs to help us forward. The result is that Indian industry continues to be where it was. Instead of Germany and Austria, Japan has flooded our market. Though we cannot expect much help from the British Parliament in this matter, I am sure if we pressed our claim with unanimity and force, the love of fair play of the British democracy would assert itself and India would get fiscal autonomy. The report under consideration omits to make any proposals, I regret to say, in this regard.

Hindu-Muslim Rapprochement

Gentlemen, I now come to a question with which the very existence of the All-India Muslim League is bound up. I mean the question of the separate representation of the Musalmans in the Legislative Councils and in local bodies. I have reserved the consideration of this question to the last, not because it is less important than the others, but for us the most important of all. From the point of view of the Mohmmadans of India

it should be and is, under the present circumstances of the country, the dominant factor in Indian polity. The attitude of the Mohammedans on this question has been characterized by an utter unanimity, and intensity of conviction, which does not appear to have been adequately realized so far by the authorities.

Following upon the rapprochement of 1916, by which the Hindus and Mohammedans self-determined their national demands, the Hindus realizing its beneficent effect on the vital interests of the country, agreed to the Mohammedans having not only separate electorates, but a representation commensurate with their status and special needs in the country. The Mohammedans on their part renounced their participation in mixed electorates. This result was arrived at by mutual consent. That constitutes the chief basis of the agreement. The Montagu-Chelmsford Report, however, fails to grasp the significance of the settlement. "We are not aware on what basis the figures were arrived at," say the authors of the Report. I wonder what other basis than the one I have pointed out could be more valid. Is not mutual consent the most satisfactory basis for any such settlement as the one under consideration ? I may be permitted to point out that in the discussion of its proposals, which the publication of the Report has evoked, there has been a unanimous condemnation of, and protest against, on the part of Hindus and Mohammedans alike, of the view taken of the Hindu-Muslim agreement referred to by the authors of the Report. I may further remark that, having regard to the dissatisfaction already engendered by the attitude disclosed in the Report in regard to this matter, there cannot be any doubt that the Musalmans, any less than their Hindu brethren, will agree to any thing less than the restoration of the settlement in any Bill that may be in contemplation. It is my duty, knowing as I do the intensity of Muslim feeling on this question, to sound this note of warning and of appeal. Gentlemen, I am afraid I have taxed your patience and your indulgence to an inordinate extent, but the seriousness of the occasion is my excuse for it. We, who are assembled here, have a sacred though a heavy duty to perform, and I pray that God will grant us all light and guidance to see which way our

duty lies.

Conclusion

Gentlement, I shall conclude with one last word You will have observed that I have refrained from indicating any specific lines for your deliberations to proceed upon. This I need hardly say is not due to any oversight, but to the fact that I very strongly feel that on so momentous an occasion as the present, no individual opinion should be imposed upon the community, and that the community itself should, through its chosen representatives, declare its mind on the issue before it, according to the constitutional procedure by which we are bound. While on this point, I cannot but deplore that at this juncture the Musalman community is deprived of the benefit of the advice and guidance of some of its most trusted leaders, who, moreover, had made a special study of the constitutional issues on which we are called upon to pronounce. I refer especially to that brilliant publicist Mr. Mohamed Ali, who occupies a position of outstanding eminence in the progressive party of modern democracy, and who, together with his brother and a number of distinguished *conferers,* is still condemned to internment without any well-established cause. The Musalmans keenly feel the wrong inflicted on them by their being thus deprived of most valuable assistance and guidance in the task of considering and pronouncing upon the Report of Indian Constitutional Reforms. May I once again appeal to the Government to meet the wishes and satisfy the sentiments of the Muslim community in this regard.

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LOYALTY TO THE RULE VERSUS LOYALTY TO THE FAITH*

You have been pleased to summon me, a mere commoner from a corner of the Indian Continent, to preside over the deliberations of a body whose activities, based on the noble principles of Islam, have been moulding into shape the nascent aspirations of the Muslim nationhood of India. The honour which you have thus conferred upon me is unique and evokes my heartfelt gratitude ; but the responsibility which this position carries with it is also unquestionable and immense, specially at a time when dark clouds are looming over the political horizon of the country, big with the possibilities of a political devastation which may engulf civilization all over the globe. My remarks apply with special force to the Musalmans of India, who are being hemmed in on all sides by enemies bent on the destruction, not merely of Islamic Empires, but also of Islamic civilization and culture. The great World War, which seems to be coming to an end, has brought problems relating to Islam to the forefront all over the world. These problems call for solution, not only to protect the temporal power of Islam, but also those spiritual forces which for the last 13 centuries have illumined the path of material and moral progress all over the civilized world. I feel confident that having conferred such a unique honour upon me, you will also come forward to render me all help and assistance in carrying on the duties of such an exalted office. I also feel sure that with your help and assistance we will be able to guide the deliberations of this session of the League in a way which will lead to the successful attain-

* Presidential address delivered by A.K. Fazlul Haque at the Delhi session held on 30th December, 1918.

ment of all those aims and aspirations, which we have always kept in view as the guiding principles of the great organization to which we all have the honour to belong.

Muslim Apprehension about the Fate of Turkey

Brethren, we have met to-day under circumstances entirely different from those that prevailed in this Sub-Continent during the last four years. The great World War seems to be coming to an end. The thunders of cannon balls and the clash of arms are becoming fainter and fainter, and we are all on the tiptoe of expectation for the peace which alone can bring relief from the awful conditions through which we have passed during the War. Anything that was good and noble in the civilized world has been practically shattered to pieces, and when the long-wished-for peace will come, we will have to rebuild a new order of things out of the ruins of the old. But even this peace is still far off, and we will have to wait anxiously for the opportunity which peace will bring in its train. There are many difficulties in the way of real peace. The innate and inborn envy and jealousies of the nations of Europe will raise insurmountable difficulties in the way of peace, and unless some unforeseen event happens, all our cherished hopes for peace will end in disappointment.

The present age is full of anxieties for Muslims all over the world. The great World War, which appears to be ending so happily and triumphantly for the Allies, has unfortunately brought deep and gloomy forebodings to Muslim minds. Muslim countries are now the prey of the land-grabbing propensities of the Christian nations, in spite of the solemn pledges given by these very nations that the World War was being fought for the protection of the rights of small and defenceless minorities. Morocco, Tunis, Algiers, Egypt have all their tales of woe to tell about the unabashed greed of Christian Powers, and hardly do we get a little breathing time to deal with one unfortunate Muslim state, when cries of distress come from other quarters. Only yesterday, the attempts made by the Christian Powers to throttle Iran raised loud protests from all over the Muslim

world, and today we find the same powers seriously bent on the dismemberment of Turkey. To us, the Muslims all over the World, the fate of Turkey is bound with problems of deep concern. We cannot forget that Turkey raises, for all Muslims, the questions of the Khilafat and the protections of our holy places. We are often told that England has under its sway more Muslims than any other power in the world. But alas, is it not within the memory of even the present generation that the ministers of the British Crown have seldom had any scruples in casting to the winds their obligations to the Muslims, specially of India, and even trampled under foot, solemn pledges given time and again to the Muslim world ? Over the past misdeeds of British statesmen, we may draw a veil, but we feel that the time has come when we should warn these statesmen that it is against all rules of prudence to draw ceaseless drafts on the bank of loyalty. It is a trite saying, but nevertheless true, that it is the last straw that often breaks the camel's back. It will be a miracle if it is otherwise with Indian Muslims.

From a consideration of the prospects of a speedy peace, let us turn to the efforts that are being made by the victorious Allies to discuss the terms of Peace. It is a matter of great regret that in these deliberations of the various Powers, no Muslim, Power will be allowed to take any part. Muslim cases will thus go by default. It is obvious that we cannot depend on British statesmen to represent the Muslim cause. On'y the other day, a prominent British statesman, Lord Robert Cecil, declared that Turkey has shown an utter incapacity for ruling subject races. Fortunately, no detailed discussion on this point is necessary, because it will suffice if we refer the noble lord to the pages of Gibbon, Froude and Arnold, and of Orientalists like Margouleith and Pickthall for an authentic testimony to the manner in which Turkey has discharged her obligations to subject races. Even the most hostile critic of Turkey will admit that history abounds with instances not merely of the liberal administrative policy of the Turks, but also of the manner in which Turkey has often given shelter to small Christian nations, who but for Turkish help, would have been wiped out of existence by bigger Christian Powers. I would have treated the remarks of the British minister with supreme contempt had it

not been for the fact that these words of the British minister clearly indicate that a case is being made out to throttle Turkey. I will, therefore, venture to take up a little of your time to discuss this question briefly before I pass on to other matters.

Turkish Treatment of Subject People

Eminent historians have borne testimony to the magnanimity with which Turkey has been treated its Christian subjects, even in cases of proved treason and disloyalty, and how the much maligned Turks have given practical demonstrations of that toleration which Christians often preach in theory, but never show in practice. Everyone knows that for centuries past, Russia has bren the biggest enemy of Turkey. The internal dissensions in Russia have often given Turkey opportunities of bringing about a dismemberment of the Russian Empire. But Turkey never played a mean part by hitting Russia below the belt. Only the other day thousands of Russian Jews were turned out of Russia in the most inhuman manner. They were homeless and resourceless in a foreign land, and would have succumbed to the privations with which they were faced, had not the hospitality of the Turks saved them from the dismal fate that awaited them. In this respect, the history of Europe has been repeating itself for centuries. Not once or twice but times without number, the Jews have been turned out, bag and baggage, from Christian countries only to get shelter in the domains of the very Turks whom Christian statesmen have denounced as incapable of dealing with subject races. The phrase 'Wandering Jew' has passed into a proverb to represent the sad plight of Jews all over Europe, knocking at every Christian door, but getting a response from none. It is the Turks who have invariably given them shelter, and at the present moment it is well known that the Middle East and Near East have become colonies of these wandering Jews, who have concentrated in Solonica as their final abode to live peacefully and happily under Turkish rule.

England's Opportunities in India

I have already referred to the remarks of Lord Robert Cecil

about the incompetence of the Turks in dealing with subject races, but have the English given practical proofs of their own capability of dealing with nations committed to their care ? Tall talk and low performance are perhaps the privileges of Englishmen, just as they think that they have a right to claim all sorts of privileges which can fall to the fate of any nation in the world. But have they pondered carefully over the performance of their countrymen in India, and have they got imagination enough to conceive what will be the verdict of history on the achievements of the British nation in India and other Eastern countries ? It is well known that the Duke of Wellington, who earned the appellation of the Iron Duke, claimed in his speech, delivered in 1832 that the British people who are the favoured people of the Almighty and are pure and holy distributors of justice all over the world. The Viceroys and Secretaries of State for India, in their reports and speeches, have also spoken about the British administration in terms of similar praise and admiration. The world might well have been spared these uncalled for certificates of personal superiority, because we are all prepared to give the British nation the fullest credit for whatever good they may have done in India. No one denies that England has given India the most precious human possession called peacc, that the English have introduced Western arts, culture and civilization in the East and have more or less successfully acquainted the nations of the Orient with modern methods of administration. They have introduced a system of administration which, though capable of many improvements, is still unsurpassed by any such system in the civilized world. They have also introduced wise and humane laws and regulations. Their courts of justice are ideal in their own sphere, and may well excite the envy of the civilized world. We are prepared to give the British nation the fullest credit for their achievements in India, but there is also another side of the picture which we cannot afford to forget. The British nation has had opportunities of successful administration in India which have seldom fallen to the lot of any other nation in dealing with Eastern races. India can boast of an ancient civilization and culture of which any nation may be proud. Our grievance is that these opportunities have been misused and utterly neglected. Far

from taking the fullest advantage of the opportunity they had within their reach, the British administrators have utterly misused their opportunities in a manner unparalleled in histoiy. About 17 years ago on August, 16, 1901, Lord George Hamilton, then Secretary of State for India, made the following announcement in Parliament : "It has been said that the British nation has introduced the system of administration which is eating into the very vitals of the Indian nation. The British administrators are held up as blood suckers in their dealing with the people of India. I freely admit that, if it can be shown that India has deteriorated in material prosperity under British rule, I will concede that we stand self-condemned, and that we have no right to hold any further the reins of administration in India."

I am prepared to accept the criterion laid down by Lord George Hamilton in judging of the benefits derived by Indians under British rule, by comparing the material condition of the Indian people in pre-British days and modern conditions under British rule. Fortunately, we have definite facts and data for undertaking a comparison of India under pre-British rule and India under British rule. A slight reflection will show that the most prominent feature of the deterioration of the material condition of the Indian people is the frequency of the devastating famines which have been causing havoc among the people of India in quick succession.

Comparison of the Havoc Caused by Famines in Ancient Times and under Britisn Rule

Famines have now become an acknowledged feature of Indian life. One famine succeeds another, and the only manner which British administrators want to shake off their responsibility is by remarking that famines are due to natural causes, mostly connected with uncertain rainfall. In other words, the British administration is not responsible for the frequency or intensity of the famines in India ; but these statesmen forget that we have got definite evidence for the comparison of the

state of things under-Muslim rule with the condition of things under British rule in India.

We have got documents to show that famines under Muslim rule were characterized by the following redeeming features :

(1) They were all of a local character, or in other words, were not widespread in their effects or intensity.

(2) They never appeared suddenly, but always showed signs which led the authorities to make preparations for meeting the coming disasters.

(3) Famines in ancient times were not responsible for that appalling loss of human life which has characterized famines in modern India. Mr. Digby, in his book *Prosperous India*, has made the following observations by dividing famines into different periods :

11th Century	Two famines	Both local
13th Century	One famine	One famine round-about Delhi
14th Century	Three famines	All local
15th Century	Two famines	Both local
16th Century	Three famines	All local
17th Century	Three famines	Incidence not known
18th Century	One famine	Subas south and north of Delhi
Up to 1744	Four famines	In Sind, all local

For the purpose of comparison, I will now point out, from official records, the famines of the 19th century :

Ist Era	Five famines	mortality-several millions
2nd Era	Two famines	mortality-five lakhs
3rd Era	Six famines	mortality-five lakhs
4th Era	Eighteen famines	mortality-several millions.

It appears from an analysis of official documents that from 1854 to 1901, more than 30 million people died of famine. Mr.

Digby calculates that, roughly speaking, the mortality in the last 30 years of the 19th century were four times those that had occurred during the previous century.

Mr. Ramesh Chunder Dutt has said that the famines of the 19th century in India were unparalleled in their rigour and intensity by famines in any other age of this country. He says that in 1877, 1889, 1892 and 1900 famines had carried off more than 15 million people, in other words, the deaths by famine amounted to the populations of some minor States of Europe. According to Mr. Digby, it is worthy of note that the number of people who fell victims to wars from 1703 to 1900 amounted to 5 million while in Hindustan, within 10 years, namely 1891 to 1900, more than 19 million people lost their lives in famines.

The question now arises, what are the causes of these frequent and devastating famines in British India within only about a century of British rule ? The answer is writ large on the pages of British statistical reports, based on facts collected by British officials themselves. British officials maintain that famines are caused by uncertain, and often inadequate rainfall, and hence are beyond the control of the British officials who are after all human beings, who can have no power over the forces of Nature. But this lame excuse is opposed to the facts. It is possible that a rise in price or inadequacy of food may be due to scarcity caused by late or erratic rainfall; but this scarcity generally assumes famine proportions mostly owing to the poverty of the people and their low purchasing power to meet the vital necessaries of life. It is generally the case that while there is scarcity in any area, there are sufficient food stuffs in neighbouring areas to meet the deficit of food. But the poverty of the people stands in the way of taking advantage of surplus food stuffs in other areas. Scarcity may be due to natural causes, but the incapacity of the people to face such scarcity, the inability of the people to face even a slight rise in prices, is due to general poverty. Widespread famines follow local scarcity, when people are unable to buy the necessities of life owing to general poverty.

Poverty of the People of Hindustan

The poverty of the Indian people has passed into a proverb. Official records admit that the average income of an Indian is less than £ 2 a year, whereas in the United Kingdom (England and Scotland), the average income exceeds £ 45 a year. Mr. Dutt (in his *India in the Victorian Era*) has observed that even in most fertile tracts in India, the daily earnings of a peasant labourer does not exceed three pence a day. His daily life is a tale of miseries. His hut and hovel can hardly give him protection from the inclemencies of weather; his women go almost without raiment; his children run about naked; his hut contains no utensils or the coarsest furniture; and whether it is the burning heat of a tropical summer, or the shivering cold of a bleak winter, the Indian peasant, with his wife and children, passes through physical discomforts which make him the most miserable creature in existence.

On the other hand, if we turn our eyes towards the past, we will find that only a few centuries before the advent of the British, Indians had acquired the reputation of being wealthy and prosperous. Western nations used to cast longing eyes on the wealth of the Indian people, and the whole civilized world used to covet their prosperity and their material superiority in all the necessaries of life. It was this wealth and material prosperity of the Indian people that lured foreign nations to try their luck in India. British historians have borne unanimous testimony to the prosperous condition of the Indians even at the commencement of British rule in this country. Only about a hundred years ago, Bengal was richer than even Britain; and when in 1757, Clive entered Murshidabad, he wrote that he found that city as extensive, as populous and as rich as London, with this difference that individually the citizens of Murshidabad were richer and more opulent than those of London.

It is often said that the present rise of prosperous and flourishing cities on all sides, the increase of trade and commerce in volume and intensity and the popular demand for

articles of luxury, amusement and pleasure in India are definite signs of the prosperity of Hindustan under British rule. It is possible that this will be the first impression on the mind of a superficial observer, but such an impression is wholly wrong and misleading. The Hindustan which catches the eyes of a traveller or a superficial observer is not the real Hindustan. It is the shadow of Hindustan with a veneer of European civilization to hide its real character. No wonder that the real Hindustan is completely shut from the view of the British people. In this connection, I may be permitted to quote the words of the great historian Mr. Ramesh Chunder Dutt. Mr. Dutt says : Things in Hindustan are materially different from those in England. The external trade of Hindustan is carried on by foreigners with foreign money. The profits of foreign trade go to Europe and are not available in Hindustan .The earnings through the foreign trade of India are not the earnings of the inhabitants of Hindustan. Moreover, the volume of Indian foreign trade is no index of the national earnings of the people of Hindustan. For example in 1881, during the comparative prosperity of the administration of India under Lord Ripon, the value of the total exports and imports of Hindustan amounted to £ 12 million whereas in 1900, when Hindustan wes in the grip of famine and distress, the value of exports and imports amounted to about £ 120 million. Will not one unacquainted with the real Hindustan say from these statistics alone that Hindustan earned more money or consumed more food in 1900 than in 1881 ?

There is another imporant point about foreign trade which must not be overlooked. Foreign trade, through foreign money and foreign agencies, is not necessarily harmful to the economic condition of the country. Imported goods are generally cheaper than indigenous goods. These foreign goods serve a double purpose. Through competition, they raise the standard of the efficiency of home products, and although they diplace home products to a certain extent in the beginning, the saving to the buyer

effected by cheaper prices goes to increase the wealth in the country. But in Hindustan, even this indirect benefit from foreign trade is hemmed in by limitations. The foreign trade of Hindustan does not run in natural channels, but is forced on the people of the country. For instance, the tax on the production of whole goods falls on those articles of production which could have been easily produced in this country. This forces Hindustan to export her essential commodities of life. Equally disastrous are the taxes on cotton goods, which come from the pockets of the people in the shape of taxes on vital articles of food. Judged by these facts and circumstances, we can answer Lord George Hamilton's test by saying that Hindustan has unquestionably deteriorated in material prosperity under British Rule.

Cause of the Decline of Material Prosperity

Let us now consider what are the causes of this decline in material prosperity. Are the causes beyond the power of human control, or are they the natural outcome of the basic policy of British administration in Hindustan ? A little consideration will show that the answer to the first part of the question is in the negative, and the second part in the affirmative. In other words, the causes of this decline in material prosperity can be clearly traced to the policy pursued by the British administrators in Hindustan. In the first place, British administration has done nothing to increase the source of natural wealth in the country. Secondly, all the wealth available in the country has been drained out by the pursuit of a policy which could not have left any wealth in the country without falsifying the truth of those natural laws which control the growth and development of the material wealth in a country.

This is a serious charge to lay against any civilized administration but I have no alternative but to state what I feel to be truth. Let us examine the position a little closely.

All nations derive their sources of wealth from agriculture, trade and commerce, arts and industries and a sound policy of

finance in administration. Let us consider all these points separately as applied to Hindustan.

Decline of Agriculture

First take up the case of agriculture in India in ancient times. The high state of excellence in methods of agriculture in India was well known throughout the world. Rulers throughout the country had realized the importance of irrigation in the improvement of agriculture. Wells, channels, large tanks, which now are found all over the country, bear witness to the fact that the ancient rulers in Hindustan were very anxious to increase the sources of wealth in the country. Unfortunately, in the time of the British rulers, this important part of administration seems to have been completely ignored. It is a fact that in Hindustan the production of crops per acre is less than the average product of other countries. In Japan, whose soil is not blessed by nature more than the soil of Hindustan, the produce of paddy is at least twice that of Hindustan. All this is due to the neglect of the Government to improve methods of agriculture suited to the soil of Hindustan. There are ample opportunities of developing sufficient irrigation projects by drawing water from rivers, wells aad canals. Opportunities are also not wanting of gathering and reaping crops by means of machines and other instruments (*vide* recommendations of the Agriculture Commission). But all the bounties of nature and the opportunities of improving the productivity of the soil are lost through the apathy of the Government in the matter of improving the material prosperity of the people. The government spends crores of rupees in building railways and other means of locomotion to patronize the products of British firms at home, but unfortunately the Government in Hindustan does not pay the slightest attention to improving agriculture by even ordinary methods. No one can ignore the importance of railways in the development of the resources of a country, but irrigation is no less important than the development of railways. The Famine Commission of 1880 wrote strongly that the claims of irrigation should have the first place in the attention of the Government in order to prevent recurring famines; but the only way in which

the Government honoured the recommendation was by spending from 1880 to 1897, six times more on railways than on other projects. Mr. Ramesh Chunder Dutt has worked out that the total amount spent on irrigation by March, 1902, was less than £ 24 million as against £ 226 million spent on railways. Fortunately, there are signs for the better, and there are reasons for hope that there is the chance of a dawn of good sense in the minds of administrators regarding the improvement of irrigation in Hindustan.

Decline in Trade and Arts

Let us take up the case of trade and arts in Hindustan. It is needless to refer to the high position occupied by Hindustan in the annals of ancient times as a country famous for fine arts and industries. The report of the Industrial Commission contains the following remarks : "in ancient times the tracts of Europe which are renowned for arts and industries were the abodes of uncivilized nations. Hindustan was at that time renowned for its wealth and for its skilful artisans. In the beginning of British rule also, Hindustan was in no way inferior to the advanced nations of Europe in the matter of arts and and industries. But after the introduction of British rule, people were forced to pay less and less attention to arts and industries, and more and more to agriculture. Sir Henry Cotton has written, in his *New India*, that the British companies immediately took hold of all opportunities of selling their goods on a large scale in India, and secondly the prominence that was given to Manchester completely wiped out the improvements of handlooms in Hindustan. In the words of the well-known historian H.H. Wilson, "British owners of industries and concerns used the Government of India as a political weapon to strangle the ancient industries of Hindustan."

All the above causes have combined to convert Hindustan from being a country possessing arts and industries into a completely agricultural country. All the laws and regulations were passed for the improvement of British industries and not those of Hindustan. A similar attempt was made by England with respect to her trade and commerce with America, but after the

American War of Independence, the United States formulated a policy of its own, and by reciprocal laws and regulations relating to demand and supply, the United States has managed to march abreast of England in the improvement of its national wealth.

The most powerful cause of the downfall of Indian arts and industries has been the financial poverty of the Indian people.

It is unfortunately true that the East India Company and the British Parliament of about a century ago, in the pursuit of their selfish policy of encouraging the industries in Great Britain and depressing corresponding industries in Hindustan, left no chance for the Hindustani industries to prosper, with the result that in about a century of British rule, practically the whole of the indigenous industries of Hindustan had collapsed. Mandates came from England to employ Hindustani workers in the firms of the Company, so that skilled indigenous labour might be utilized for the growth of British industries in Hindustan. These workers were given considerable facilities for ousting native weavers and other similar workers from the field of competition. Heavy duties practically killed all the native industries in silk and fine cotton, and British goods of inferior stuff filled the markets because of the low duties imposed on them.

Dealing with this subject, H.H. Wilson, the famous historian, has made the following remarks : "The owners of mercantile houses in England did not scruple to strangle a rival by political injustice whom they could not under ordinary circumstances have successfully faced in open competitions. Crores of Hindustani artisans were deprived of their labour...... All this is a sad chapter in the history of British rule in Hindustan. The history of the injustice by British merchants on the inhabitants of Hindustan would be incomplete without a reference to the systematic manner in which British artisans used machinery for the production of articles which in Hindustan were being produced according to old crude principles of manual labour. To add to this, the British Government in Hindustan tried to strangle the production of the manual labour of the people of Hindustan by the imposition of heavy taxes.

The fate of the Indian artisans was complete when Japan and China also entered the field and joined hands with the merchants of Great Britain in putting down indigenous industries of India."

In 1837, when Queen Victoria ascended the throne, Indian artisans were at their last gasp. To take one instance out of many ; Hindustani handkerchiefs had a good market in Europe, and this trade which was open to the people of Hindustan was virtually strangled by the levying of heavy export duties on all silk products by the British Government in India. Parliament made enquiries on how the trade of Hindustan in this respect could be stopped altogether. In other words, the British Government never cared to find out how the trade and commerce of Hindustan could be improved, but directed their enquiries to finding out how the trade and industries of Hindustan could be superseded by the corresponding trade of Great Britain. The life of the East India Company came to an end in 1857, but long before this, India had fallen from her high pedestal as one of the foremost industrial countries in the world; and the people of Hindustan were left to fend for their existence on the fitful produce of their lands by means of obsolete methods of agriculture carried out under favourable conditions. The Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malvia has in his writings gone very deep into this matter; and he remarks that the East India Company, from about 1788, turned their attention to the question of the restriction of the cotton of East Bengal, and from the very beginning, the Directors of the East India Company made no secret of their anxiety to deprive the artisans of Bengal from reaping the benefits of their skilled labour by open competition in European markets. Every one knows of the world-wide fame of the muslin of Dacca. It is a sad story how this industry was strangled by the enforcement of laws and regulations. But repressive laws were not enough. Barbarous methods were adopted to incapacitate skilled workers by cutting off or mutilating fingers of artisans, and human conscience revolts against the atrocities committed on innocent people to give opportunities to the mills and handlooms of England.

India came under the sway of the British Crown in 1858,

but even after this revolution, the British merchants used to influence the Government in the imposition of duties on goods imported into India. The flow of British goods into Indian markets was facilitated by the reduction of import duties in India; and in 1879, which was financially a bad year for India, Parliament proposed a reduction in Indian import duties. In 1882 all import duties, except on wine and salt, were practically abolished. Unfortunately, this very repeal of the import duties reacted adversely on Hindustan. In 1894 the former import duties were re-imposed with slight modifications. An import duty of 5 percent was imposed on cotton cloth and on coarse cotton. A duty of 5 percent was imposed on indigenous cotton goods, which might enter into competition with foreign goods. Even on coarse Indian-made goods, which might in any way enter into competition with Lancashire goods, heavy taxes were imposed. Bombay products in arts and industries were burdened with taxes seldom known in any part of the civilized world. In the course of 150 years, British rulers in India brought into perfection the policy which helped, not the industry of Hindustan, but of England (*Vide* R.C. Dutt's *India in the Victorian Age*). Generally speaking, the prosperity of the modern European nations has been built on the industrial destruction of ancient nations and communities in various parts of the world. This is what Spain did in plundering South America, and such has been the policy of other European nations. Till the middle of the 18th century, the arts and industries of England were in a decadent state. So far as skill was concerned, the Indian artisans were in no way inferior to those of Lancashire. In skilled and creative genius, Hindustani handloom weavers were superior to the mill and machine weavers of Europe. I take this opportunity of quoting the following few lines from the writings of Mr. Brooke Adams (*The Law of Civilization and Decay*) : "It is a law of nature that new industries depend for their development on the finance available in the hands of the people to give them full circulation. Fortunately for England, enough wealth was available to Britishers as the result of their loot in Hindustan. This was illustrated by what happened in the early days of British rule in Carnatic and in Bengal, where enormous wealth came into the hands

of the Britishers in quite an unexpected manner. Such an undeserved luck of financial prosperity has seldom been witnessed in any country in the civilized world.

Mr. Digby says that it is impossible to have a correct estimate of the wealth which fell into the hands of the European nations as a result of their loot in the East, but it is generally estimated that somewhere between £ 500 million and £ 1,500 million found their way into the British banks between Plassey and Waterloo. Comment is superfluous.

It is sometimes urged that, even assuming that the British Government had not done its duty in the matter of the improvement of the arts and industries of Hindustan or of the methods of agriculture prevailing in the conntry, the duty of the leaders of the Indian people was also clear. In other words, if there is any blame at all, it must be shared by the leaders of the Indian people and the British Government alike. It is true that Indian leaders have not fully done their duty in this matter, but the reason is also very clear. The decline in material prosperity and the poverty of the Indian people made it impossible for Indian leaders to embark on any large scheme which would have successfully arrested the decline of Indian arts and industries and would also have successfully entered into competition with the products of Great Britain. It may be that there are some Indians who may be called wealthy and rich, but their number is small, and the total wealth at the disposal of the Indian people has always been inadequate to the task of improving the national industries of India. Mr. Digby, in his book *Causes of the Decline of Indian Industries*, has mentioned three reasons why Indian leaders could not help the people of India in protecting the national industries :

(1) In the regions in the vicinity of Madras and Bengal, which were the first areas to come under the rule of the East India Compay, all sources of wealth were drained dry and the people of these tracts had no money to purchase machines and other instruments for the improvement of industries.

(2) The British Government did not think of helping the

people of the country; on the contrary, they helped British competitors, as against the children of the soil, who struggled hard to overcome the difficulties in their path.

(3) The Government helped the import of foreign money in the development of the arts and industries of the country, with the result that the wealth derived from arts and industries filled the pockets of foreign capitalists at the expense of the natives of India.

The inadequacy of financial facilities have long been a serious obstacle in the way of the initiation and development of arts and industries in Hindustan. I am not one of those who think that Indians are unfitted by nature to initiate and develop arts and industries by improved methods. Given the opportunity, Indians have distinguished themselves in the departments of arts, commerce and industries as they have done in other walks of life. This is amply illustrated by the manner in which Indian artisans and craftsmen have distinguished themselves in the activities of the various branches of the well known mills and industries of Tata. It is well known that when Lord Dalhousie filled the country with a network of railways in order to find a suitable market for the iron industries of England, immense quantities of iron and iron products were found in various parts of India which could have been utilized for the prupose of building up a well-furnished and well-regulated iron industry in Hindustan. Had the situation been properly handled, not only would the requirements of Hindustan have been satisfied in the matter of iron products, but Hindustan would have been enabled to build up the locomotive of iron industries to compete on equal terms with the advanced nations of the world. But our rulers in Hindustan treated the interests of India in such a vital manner in a spirit of envy and jealousy. British industrialists thought that if Hindustan were given an opportunity, it would become a very formidable rival of England, with respect to iron industries in the markets of the world. With the shrewdness which distinguished British industrialists, they at once got alarmed, and made their path of success clear by shutting the possibilities of Indians achieving any means of success in various arts and

industries, especially in those in which iron plays an important part.

Arigculture, trade and commerce, arts and industries, have all thus deteriorated and been practically strangled under British rule. I will now turn for a few minutes to a consideration of the financial policy of the British Government. Even the most devoted admirer of British rule in Hindustan will not deny that the average tax on a native of Hindustan is much higher than the average of any other civilized country in the world. You have also to remember that the average income of a native of Hindustan is extremely low; and from this, it will not be difficult to realize that the ensuing taxation is the heavier in Hindustan than in any other country in the world. Compare, for instance, an income of £ 1 with an income of £ 45. Three shillings out of an income of £ 1 tells far more heavily on the payee, than a tax of £ 3 on an income of £ 45. It is, therefore, evident that even a tax of £ 3 in some respects is lighter than a tax of 3/- s. The truth is that in Hindustan the burden is too heavy to be borne by the taxpayer, but it becomes sheer cruelty if this heavy tax is imposed on a resourceless people for the benefit of foreign capitalists. In former times there has also been heavy taxation in Hindustan, but the rigours of the taxes under British rule have been more strict and far more severe than in ancient times. Moreover, in pre-British days no money used to go out of Hindustan, so that in some shape or other, the taxes realized redounded to the benefit of the country.

I will now say a few words about the *export of money out of India*. This aspect of British rule is the saddest record of the fate of any country under foreign rule. Volumes have been written on this question, about the manner in which the people of the country have been fleeced by foreign rulers, and I will not take up your time by repetition of a subject which is well known to every educated Indian. The East India Company were merchants and traders as well as rulers in the country. The raw materials and finished products were stored on the banks of the Hugli, and then conveyed in ships to England and disembarked on the banks of the Thames. The loss to Hindustan from the economic point of view is evident, but there

is another point which is not generally known to the public. Apart from the profits enjoyed by the British people by the manner in which Indian goods are sold by means of British coinage, there is another source of the drain of wealth from India to England. In the financial statements of the Government of India, there is the column of expenditure under the heading 'Services Rendered to India'. It is amazing that last year this expenditure amounted to £ 17 million. All sources of income in Hindustan have run dry, and whatever may be left is successfully exported from India for the benefit of the people of England.

Unfounded Charges of Indian Incompetence

The British Government generally puts forward several reasons against the introduction of self-government in Hindustan. The first is the usual plea of our incompetence for home-rule. This is not only a cruel, but an entirely unfounded accusation. Our critics also know that the charge is definitely unfounded, and even insulting. It is belied by the past history of Hindustan. Leaving alone the distant past, the achievements of Abul Fazl and Toddar Mal are yet unsurpassed by anything done by the British administrators, although they had the advantage of years of improved methods of the arts of administration. The administrations in natives, which are solely in Indian hands, also bear witness to the genius of Indians in the arts of self-government. Competency is a relative term, and experience has shown that whenever Indians have been given a chance or opportunity, they have excelled British officers in the arts of administration. Suitable opportunities are withheld from Indians, and the charge of incompetency is nevertheless levelled against them Take an example: the badge of the Victoria Cross was not open to Indians in the beginning of British rule, but when restrictions were removed, Indians demonstrated their superiority in winning this highest of military honours much oftener than the Britishers themselves. Fitness for home-rule comes from experience acquired from the proper enjoyment of the benefits that follow home-rule, and home-rule must come before fitness or unfitness can be judged. They cannot be judged on mere theoretical grounds. Any other method would

be worthy of the fool in the story who swore never to go near the water till he had learnt to swim. It is only in the proper discharge of responsibility that one acquires a fitness for being trusted with responsibility. Mistakes may be committed in the beginning, but these very mistakes will teach the way to avoid mistakes. No child will ever learn to walk unless he goes through periods of falls or slips of the feet. It is a truism, but none the less true, that nations attain ultimate success from initial failure as well as successes.

The authors of the Reform Scheme have remarked that there can be no doubt as to the Indians' ultimate fitness for self-government, but that they are not fit at the present moment. This is a slur on the whole Indian nation. If we are yet unfit, even after 150 years of British rule, we will never be fit at any time in the future, so long as the present system of British rule continues to exist. The poverty of the Indian masses, their illiteracy and the divisions of the Indians into innumerable races, religions and nations are also stressed as obstacles in the way of the attainment of self-government by the Indian people. Let us consider these objections a little closely. If we look into the future in the light of the experience of the past, there is hardly any hope for the disappearance of the awful poverty of the people or the removal of the illiteracy of the masses, so long as the present British system of administration continues to exist. As regards the last objection, the differences that exist are likely to be enhanced, rather than diminished, so long as an irresponsible foreign administration remains in power. Under present conditions, all the divergent elements of the population vie with each other to secure the good offices of the ruling power. This naturally breeds envy and jealousy in the mind of one section of the people against another. Even in England material prosperity, as well as the removal of illiteracy, did not precede but followed the introduction of home-rule and self-government. Similarly, in the cases of the United States of America, Canada, Transval, Switzerland and other small States, complete home-rule prevails in spite of the diversity in the population of diverse races, religions, creeds and nations. Moreover, the representative and responsible governments prevalent in these countries are in no way inferior to those prevail-

ing in the most highly advanced nations of the globe. In these small states, the self-government that prevails has been the *cause* of the unification of the diverse elements of the population by creating, in each unit, a sense of responsibility and of the duty of safeguarding the common interests of the entire population. Even so, with the grace of Allah, these things will happen in Hindustan. It is also said that public spirit is wanting in India, and in the absence of the public spirit, no system of self-government can be introduced in this country. But facts do not substantiate even this charge. It is now admitted that long before even the birth of Christ, a highly developed system of government was prevalent in India. We all know that the Orient has been the birthplace of municipal institutions. Moreover, the authors of the Reforms Scheme have themselves admitted that these qualities of self-government are acquired and developed by actual work in practice. It, therefore, follows that unless Indians are given an opportunity to show their worth, it is difficult to say, if at all, when and under what circumstances Indians will acquire the qualities necessary to fit them for self-government.

Communal Conflicts

As an instance of Hindu-Muslim disunity, the communal riots of Arrah of 1817 are often quoted. It is said that the hostility of Hindu zemindars, *mahajans,* lawyers and other sections is so keen and widespread that the Muslims would be ill-advised to put the halter of insecurity round their neck by voting for a system of government which will put powers in the hands of the Hindus' majority. It is strongly urged that it is the British Government alone which is the only real shelter for the weaker communities, and that the transfer of power from British hands would be disastrous to the Muslims and other minorities. I wish to say a few words to such kind advisers for their gratuitous advice. On the question of Hindu-Muslim quarrels, I consider it an insult to both to suggest that the Hindu is the natural enemy of the Muslim. Those who base their advice on incidents like the Arrah riots stand self-condemned, because of their hasty generalization from insufficient data. These riots are exceptions

to the happy relations between the two communities which exist throughout the Indian Peninsula, and it is absurd to rely on exceptions and ignore the admitted universal rule. Secondly, these riots are the outbursts of some kind of frenzy between the misguided sections of both communities, which fortunately seldom appear to freeze the genial current of national life. The actors in these tragic and despicable are those misguided specimens of humanity who are unable to tolerate the view-points of other people, owing to the ignorance due to want of education and other causes. It is our firm belief that with the spread of education and culture, the views of our countrymen will be broadened and mutual toleration will replace occasional discord. No instance can be quoted of educated Hindus and educated Muslims being involved in communal riots. Once again the remedy lies in calling upon both the communities to shoulder the responsibilities of the government, so that all communities may realize that such responsibilities can be discharged only by mutual co-operation and not by communal or sectional discord.

It remains to consider the oppressions committed on the Muslims by the Hindu zemindars, lawyers, money-lenders and others. A little consideration will show that such oppressions are not the responsibility of any particular religious belief or communal animosity. They have their origin in the rapacity of the powerful in plundering the weak, and in this respect the offender does not look to the religious feelings or the communal character of the victim, but to his capacity to satisfy his lust for plunder. In my own experience, I have come across the Muslim *mahajans* and other representatives of the learned profession whose oppressions on their co-religionists have not been in any respect less objectionable than those committed by the Hindu oppressors. It is the spread of education that will minimize the greed of the powerful party and also create ample powers of resistance in the weaker party. The weaker should be taught to try to protect his legitimate rights, and if necessary, they should be taught to combine irrespective of race, colour or creed, to resist the oppressor. Much depends on the individual resources of the victim himself. In many cases it is impossible for the representatives of the government

to interfere between the oppressors and the weak victims. In many cases, it has been found that even the officials, in consequence of the undue and unjustified pressure of the strong party, have even been led to side with the oppressors and to add to the troubles of the weaker party.

Alleged Infringements of Muslim Rights by Hindu Officials

It is true that a non-Indian officer may, if he likes, hold the scales even among various communities, but it is unsafe and against experience to put any reliance on the possible impartiality of non-Indian officers. Here as elsewhere, everything depends on the essential sense of justice of the officer concerned. We often hear that a certain officer is pro-Muslim and some officers are pro-Hindu, but here we have got to bear in mind the innate weaknesses of human character which may lead such officers to act from partiality or partisanship. Even at the present moment, many of the high officials are Hindus and they have means of oppressing the Muslims, and may even escape punishment by reason of the protection they may get from their own superior officers. In many cases, oppressed Muslims have petitioned the government against Hindu and European officers, but the result of such representation has not been uniform in all cases. In some cases, the local magistrate may be a strictly impartial officer and may be induced to render justice to the oppressed people by an innate sense of justice, but quite different may be the case with another magistrate who, although a non-Indian officer, is not imbued with any high sense of impartiality and is under the influence of his Hindu fellow-officers. It is, therefore, evident that an oppressed Musalman can get justice from British officers only if the circumstances are as follows : if the local officer, namely the District Magistrate, is an impartial and strict officer, and also if there is an absence of outside influence which might impair the judgment of the District Magistrate. But experience has shown that it is unsafe to depend on the possibility of the existence of both these conditions. Even if the District Magistrate is an impartial officer, his subordinates may be Hindus and not

favourably inclined to help the Muslims; or it may be that the District Magistrate may overrule his Hindu subordinates and report cases for the disposal of higher officials. Here again the same problems arise, and everything depends on the sense of justice of the officer who is to dispose of the cases, as also his immunity from extraneous influence which may hamper his judgment or induce him to ignore all sense of responsibility. In some cases, it may happen that the British official is only a figurehead and a complete tool in the hands of his Hindu subordinates. All things considered, it is evident that it is idle to build hopes on the sense of justice or the impartiality of British officers, because however much the circumstances may be in favour of an oppressed Muslim, there are other circumstances which may deprive the Muslim of the consideration of his legitimate rights. I do not maintain that this arrangement cannot be a complete safeguard against oppression and injustice, but what I do maintain is the possibility, perhaps certainty, of a better state of things into existence in the joint responsibility of the people themselves to provide for the protection of their mutual rights from oppression by any part.

Representation of Muslims in Local Bodies

Now take the case of the representation of Muslims in the governing bodies of self-government institutions. Can it be that the British Government has made sufficient provision for the protection of Muslim interests in local bodies ?

We have to remember that local self-government was introduced into India towards the sixties of the last century, but during all these years no special provision has been made for the protection of Muslim interests. In the beginning of the introduction of local-self government, the Musalmans were politically of no importance. At that time, it was more necessary than now to make provisions for the protection of their interests, but no such provisions were really made. In these bodies, if the Musalmans fail to obtain representation through election, the only means of their representation would be the limited power which the government has reserved in its own hands for the representation of minorities. These powers of nomination are

naturally limited, and it would not be surprising if Muslim interests do not in some cases get any recognition at all. In many cases, Muslim interests have suffered even though the government had wide powers of nomination for the representation of the Muslims and others. An instance in point is that of the Calcutta University. Here the government possesses the right to nominate 80 per cent of the Fellows, but in no case have the Muslims been able to secure a representation of more than 8 per cent. Some seats have been reserved in local bodies and other institutions under the Minto-Morley Scheme, but here again the representation given to Muslims is wholly insufficient. In the case of the Calcutta Corporation, the government thought that Muslim representation to the extent of 13 per cent would be sufficient, although census reports and other papers show that the percentage of the Muslims in the population of Calcutta exceeds 25 per cent. In my opinion, we should not depend on kindness of the Government in a spirit of helplessness, if in fact we have a legitimate right to have what we want. The policy of mere begging is never fruitful, however successful the beggar and his means of begging.

Treatment of Muslims by British Mercantile Bodies

There are some ignorant people who think that the British people naturally prefer the Muslims to Hindus, and therefore, when in any matter the question of the consideration to be given to the representative right of the two communities arises, Muslim interests will be safe in the hands of Britishers. Those who fall into this erroneous way of thinking have an idea that if power is to be transferred from the hands of British officials, it should be entrusted to non-official Britishers. In this connection, I wish to point out one significant fact. The Anglo-Indian community have hundreds of offices under their control where clerks and other subordinates are Indians, but it is significant that these Anglo-Indians have not shown any particular leanings towards the employment of the Muslims. It is not possible to give an exact idea of the percentage of the Muslims in the offices of these Anglo-Indians, but on a rough estimate, the Muslims in these offices do not exceed one per cent. Comment is useless. I am

not prepared to prefer the Anglo-Indians to our fellow-citizens of the Hindu community.

Apprehensions of Hindus Monopolizing Public Offices

There is another apprehension in the minds of the Muslim community regarding the introduction of self-government in India. It is said that the introduction of self-government will mean that the Hindus would completely fill up all public offices in the country. We have to see what is the total number of the offices that are now filled by Indians of all communities. The Reform Scheme (Montagu-Chelmsford Report) shows that of the total population of Hindustan, 70 per cent are agriculturists, 12 per cent are in trade and commerce, 5 per cent in various professions and 1·5 per cent in the public service or in the army. Let us assume that the total number of Indians in all the public services amounts to only one per cent of the population. Then, if all the non-Muslims are turned out of public office, and their places are given to Muslims alone, a rough calculation will show that only 3 per cent of the Muslims of Hindustan will be provided for in these public offices. But what will then be the fate of the remaining 97 per cent ? They will have to shift for themselves for their livelihood and, if nothing is available, they will have to find some means of subsistence or die of starvation. Take the converse case, and assume that all the responsible offices in government are given to non-Muslims. In such a case, 3 per cent of the population will suffer, but 97 per cent may be in the enjoyment of all those benefits which flow from the introduction of self-government. In fine arts and in works of skill and craftsmanship Muslim artisans and workers will have a complete hold, and will be in the enjoyment of benefits which follow the restrictions of export of money from the country and also through other reasons. It is, therefore, akin to madness if benefits of the three per cent are allowed to prevail to the detriment of the remaining 97 per cent. I have always wondered that theMusalmans do not realize that under the present system of government the Musalmans are the greatest sufferers. Nothing produces greater effect on our British rulers than to be subjected to agitation. For them, agitation in the

press and on platforms produces greater terror and fright than even the sound of cannon balls. Since the Musalmans are not experts in the arts of modern agitation and do not possess a powerful press, they have not got the means of giving publicity to their own legitimate claims and aspirations. For these reasons, many officers ignore Muslim claims altogether. An instance in point is the annulment of the partition of Bengal, which proved how the British Government entirely ignored the existence of the rights of the Muslim community, who formed an overwhelming majority of the population of East Bengal. Only a few days ago, Lord Ronaldshay, Governor of Bengal, told an audience in Dacca that the annulment of Partition was undertaken for the benefit of the people of East Bengal. His Excellency must have thought that 65 per cent of the population of the Province of East Bengal, consisting of Muslims who were most definitely against the annulment, were not representatives of the population of East Bengal; but that the 35 per cent, who were non-Muslims, were the real representatives. This was so because the 35 per cent were unceasingly vocal and the 65 per cent were quiet as lambs, and depended solely on the sense of justice of the British rulers. They were soon undeceived. They were completely ignored, whereas the vociferous Hindu agitators got what they wanted. All this again shows that it is not always the legitimate rights of Muslims which can protect the community; but that in many cases, they have to depend on the British rulers, sense of justice, which is influenced by various means beyond the power of the Muslims to adapt.

But this is not all. Under present conditions, every Government official, whether British or Indian, is after all a mere human being, and the only check on the exercise of his unlimited powers is his innate sense of justice and loyalty to duty. If he wants to be merciful and just, there is nothing to fear; but if he is bent on exercising his unlimited powers as an autocrat, there is nothing left to the helpless oppressed but to sit down and die. A very apt illustration of what I mean is afforded by the disturbances which took place recently in Calcutta, popularly known as the Calcutta Riots.

The Recent Calcutta Riots

I will refer to the events connected with these riots briefly, because a full report has already been published by the Bengal Provincial Muslim League, and a more detailed report, after a careful local enquiry, by the non-official Investigation Committee. As you are all aware, the *Indian Daily News* of Calcutta, in its issue of the July 27, 1918, published matter containing a most objectionable and reprehensible reference to the holy *rowza* of the Prophet. The Bengal Muslim League immediately summoned a special meeting, passed a resolution strongly condemning the action of the *Indian Daily News* and calling upon the Editor to offer an unqualified apology. The attention of the Bengal Government was immediately and pointedly drawn to the incident, but to no effect. But this was not all. The Bengal Government was indifferent, while the Editor of the paper showed an attitude of utter defiance. Upon this, the Muslim League arranged a meeting of renowned divines from all over Hindustan, with the object of making the British Government fully aware of the outraged feelings of the Muslim community. The meeting was scheduled to meet on December, 8-10, 1918. Things went on smoothly till August 31, when the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta, wanted to know certain particulars from the organizers of the meeting. This information was supplied, and on December 3, the Governor consulted a large number of Muslim leaders regarding the proposed Muslim meeting. The organizers of the meeting told the Governor that it was impossible to stop the meeting at that stage and they asked permission to wait in deputation on His Excellency to explain the whole situation and the reasons for going on with their meeting. The prayer for a deputation was rejected. On December 4, the Government banned the proposed meeting, and a communique was issued explaining the attitude taken up by the Government. One of the chief reasons referred to the fact that the meeting was scheduled to take place only a few days before *Bakrid*, and the Government apprehended that, in taking revenue for the publication, in an Anglo-Indian paper, of a most provocative statement, the Musalmans might turn the sacrificial dagger into an instrument for the annihilation of

the Hindus. What better logic could be expected from a civilized Government like the British? All this exasperated the Muslims, and they decided to disobey the prohibition and hold the projected meeting. On December 7, I was asked to intervene and to stop the meeting. The Commissioner of Police further assured me that if the meeting were stopped, he would arrange with His Excellency to receive a deputation. On December 8, no meeting was held as previously notified, and I was told that His Excellency would receive the deputation the next day at 3 p.m. At about noon, the Muslims insisted on going to the Government House to know the result of the deputation. The more the Muslims tried to force their way, the more the police stood in their way, and began pushing the Muslim crowd backward. Ultimately, the police fired on the dense Muslim crowd, killing one and wounding two Muslims. The inevitable happened, and riots broke out in all directions. Unruly elements found their opportunity of rapine and plunder. So the military were called out, and they, along with armed police, were given full liberty to use their guns in any way they liked. On December 10, a number of sepoys rushed into the Colootollah Mosque and attacked the Muslims, killing two and wounding eight innocent persons. Actual statistics are not forthcoming, but it is believed that the number killed far exceeded 500, and might even have been approximately 1,000.

As regards these riots, two points have to be kept in mind. First, that the riots did not break out because the Muslims held the projected meeting in defiance of prohibitions or that they disobeyed orders; quite the contrary, on the first day no meeting was held, because Muslims obeyed Government orders; nor would there have been any meeting on subsequent days—the people only wanted to approach the Governor to permit the meeting to be held. May be some enthusiasts even went to Government House to hear the Government decision. But the police intervened and tried to hold back the Muslims by force, and ultimately shots were fired by the police on an excited mob. This, and nothing else, led to one of the biggest riots known in Calcutta. Secondly, the moment the meeting was banned, I personally went to all high and responsible

officials to have the prohibitory order withdrawn, and I gave a personal guarantee, along with about a dozen Muslim leaders, that the meeting would be held under the most peaceful conditions, that there would be only one or two speeches by very responsible persons with a view to allay public feelings, and restore peace. When all entreaties failed, I beseeched His Excellency to allow me to explain to the meeting, in only a few minutes, why the meeting was being abandoned. But all in vain; Government was adamant, and the only reply to our entreaties was reckless military and police fire. The non-official commission which the League had set up has published a detailed report and fully supported the public point of view. Government retaliated by publishing a resolution exonerating the officials from all blame, and bestowing the highest eulogies on the military and the police. Only recently, the Secretary of State for India publicly expressed approval of the action of the Governor of Bengal and of the police and the military. One is tempted to ask, why is the public version different from that of the Government ? The answer is clear. Neither the Governor nor the Secretary of State saw things with their own eyes, they never had occasion to see what the police and the military had been doing in the streets and bye-lanes of Calcutta. They depended on reports of the police themselves, and it would be unnatural if the police were to report against themselves. And lastly, according to rules of official routine and etiquette, the Governor and Secretary of State look upon official reports as divine inspirations. Such is the sanctity attached to official reports all over the country, although officials never mix with the people to see things for themselves, first hand, and although they claim to be the bulwark of the protection of the right of the people against any oppression of their own countrymen. All these things happen under British rule; could things be worse if British rule were replaced by Indian home-rule ?

Detention of Muslim Leaders

One of the most regrettable and heart-rending errors committed by Government, as a result of the blind acceptance of the one-sided official reports, has been the policy of the deten-

tion of prisoners without trial. Some of the most venerated and popular of our leaders have been deprived of their liberty as a result of this inhuman policy, in consequence of which the whole country is seething with disaffection and discontent. The cases of Maulana Mohammad Ali, Maulana Shukat Ali, Maulana Mahmudul Hasan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and others come uppermost to our minds rent with deep and inexpressible sorrow.

Questions Relating to the Khilafat and Muslim Holy Places

Brethren, I fully realize that I have already trespassed too much on your time and patience, but I cannot resume my seat without a brief reference to the questions relating to the Khilafat and the protection of our holy places. You have heard the speech of Dr. M.A. Ansari on both these points. He has dealt with all questions relating to both these vital affairs so thoroughly that there is hardly anything for me to say. In my opinion, the question of the Khilafat should be dealt with by Muslims themselves without interference from non-Muslims, and our holy places should also be immune from non-Muslim influences. We should object to having anything to do with political mummers who outwardly profess Islam and claim some amount of influence in public. The revolt of the Sheriff of Mecca has endangered the future of our holy places, and the world of Islam is watching with sorrow and anxiety the effects of the Sherif's declaration of Independence. I wish to leave these questions to be dealt with by the revered Ulema whom I see present here; but I cannot but say a few words on one point which is likely to escape the notice of officials. All questions relating to the Khilafat and the protection of our holy places are intimately bound up with the vital articles of our faith. Our rulers are in the habit of distorting political problems by setting up their tools and sycophants to defend official points of view ; but however entertaining the pastime may be in the case of political affairs, it is fraught with danger if the experiment is tried with reference to questions relating to our religious views. We are loyal subjects of the rulers, and are prepared to prove our loyalty in actual practice by making

sacrifices. But this temporal loyalty is subject to the limitation imposed by our undoubted loyalty to our faith. We wish to warn our rulers that in making sacrifices one after another, the dividing line may soon be reached; and we need hardly emphasize that in case there is a conflict between Divine Laws and the mandates of our rulers, every true Musalman will allow the Divine Commandments to prevail over human laws, even at the risk of laying down his life.

Conclusion

The heart-rending events which I have tried to bring to your notice ought to be sufficient to put a quietus to communal strife, and to teach every patriotic Indian and every Englishman who is a sincere well-wisher of the Empire to try to put an end to those causes which are gradually leading Hindustan to inevitable ruin. This is not the time when we should waste our energy in quarrelling over the number of seats which different interests should secure in any future scheme of self-government. It is true that it is extremely important that all communities should be given an equitable share in moulding the destiny of our common motherland. But we should also remember that the numbers of seats in Legislative Assemblies are by no means an end in themselves; we should all strive for that complete freedom which is the goal of all our ambitions. We should learn to rise above petty squabbles and, if necessary, to sacrifice self on the altar of duty. Even from the point of view of the protection of their own interests, the Indian Muslims would be well-advised to forget their differences with other communities and to secure their help and co operation in all efforts at self-improvement. We shall lose half our strength if, in the protection of our own interests, we do not secure the co-operation of our non-Muslim brethren. Recent events have made it clear that in times of real danger, our non-Muslim brethren will never desert us or leave us to our fate. During the recent Calcutta riots, it was a Hindu newspaper named *Amrita Bazar Patrika* which boldly espoused the Muslim cause. I take this opportunity of publicly acknowledging services of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and of *Bharat Mitra*, an organ of the

Marwari community in Calcutta, and the help and assistance we have received from leaders of the Hindu community, who never hesitated to assist us with their invaluable advice and co-operation. It was through this help and co-operation of Hindu leaders, so ungrudgingly given, that we could make it possible to set up a non-official commission of enquiry in Calcutta. I am referring to all these events only to show that it is not true that Hindus and Muslims always cut each other's throats, but that they also render each other material help and assistance in times of difficulty. I would also like to tell our rulers that England now being practically the strongest Power in the world, a contemplation of such dazzling eminence may fill the heads of Englishmen with the wine of vanity and pride. But whether they are sober physically or not, they should be sober in the discharge of their duties in the responsible positions that they occupy; and I would earnestly appeal to our rulers to investigate matter themselves, instead of relying blindly on the reports of police officers and on flattering eulogies of office-seekers and title-hunters. These apparent friends have not the courage to tell the truth, and are in reality among the greatest enemies of British rule in India. The educated classes in India may be severe critics, but, under all circumstances, their sole aim has been to broaden the base of Government so that British rule may endure for as long a time as possible. There is a class of Englishmen who vainly think that there can be no end to British rule in India, and that it will endure for ever. This is a vain delusion. It is only the Kingdom of God that will endure till the end of time; human empires will have their rise and fall, as has been the case since the creation of the world. Standing here in Delhi; in the midst of the glimmering phantoms of departed glory, one is forcibly reminded of the hollowness of human vanity and the nothingness of man. Empires have risen and fallen on the soil of India, leaving no trace behind, and even so will one day be the fate of the British Indian Empire. We want the British people so to behave themselves that when the awful end comes, and Providence writes fiat on the British Raj. Britishers may not have cause to be ashamed of their epitaph. The British should not forget that their policy in India is capable of material improve-

ments. The Laws administered should be just and humane, not barbarous and autocratic. In particular, all repressive laws in India should be abolished. They may be worthy of the Czar or the Kaiser, but the unworthy of the genius of the British race. The Press Act and the Arms Act should be repealed forth-with, and the Defence of India Act should be so completely effaced from the statute-book as to leave no trace behind.

After all this, I cannot help remarking that it is essential that the British rulers should give up their policy of looking upon the educated classes in India with an eye of suspicion. It is an insult to the Indians themselves to suggest that the educated sections of the community have no sympathy for their unfortunate illiterate brethren. The records of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League bear witness to the anxiety which the educated classes have always felt for the masses in India. It would be unnatural if educated Indians had no feeling for their less educated brethren. After all they are bones of our bones, flesh of our flesh we have lived among them and we have to die among them, and we are bound up with them in death and in life. Wherever and whenever the poor cultivators of India have been in difficulty, it has been men like Gandhi and others, and not the foreigners, who have rushed to their aid and rendered them assistance. In all our demands for legitimate self-government, our eyes have always rested on a very wide canvass in which the demands of the masses are writ large, and which can never escape our attention. Our rulers need not have the slightest doubt that in case we succeed in wresting the reins of power from foreign hands, we will not in any way forget the legitimate claims of the millions of our illeterate brethren who constitute the real, effective population of the country.

Brethren, I have finished. I offer you my grateful thanks for the honour you have done me in calling me to the exalted position and for the patience with which you have listened to me.

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PUNJAB WRONGS AND KHILAFAT QUESTION*

Amritsar, where we are now holding the annual gatherings of the Congress and the All-India Muslim League, has been the scene of incidents which shall ever remain indelible and ugly blots on the history of the British Raj in India. But the factthat, in spite of the most depressing and dispiriting happenings, the citizens of Amritsar have made it possible for the Congress and the League to hold their sessions here calls for our admiration for these spirited patriots; and while fully appreciating their courage, perseverence and manliness, we must testify that they have, by their behaviour, furnished an ocular demonstration of the fact that martial law and its tyrannies are as powerless to silence the voice of truth as they ever deserve to remain. But the responsibility for the occurrences whether of Lahore, Amritsar or Kasur must primarily be placed at the door of the Government, who have so far been ruling India without the least regard for the desires of their subjects, and the passage of the Rowlatt Act is a concrete illustration of that disregard. This legislation was unanimously opposed by all the elected Indian members of the Legislative Council and every section of the Indian population raised its voice against it But the Government turned a deaf ear to all these voices out of tender regard for the fetish of prestige making it possible for all the woeful events of Delhi and the Punjab to follow which we and our coming generations are never likely to forget. It is not given to any common individual to appreciate the particular necessity for enacting the Rowlatt Act. It is generally asked why the legislation of the Rowlatt Act was deemed essential, while such effective weapons as the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act, the Press Act and the Defence of India Act were available

*Presidential address delivered by Hakim Mohammed Ajmal Khan at the Amritsar session held on 29-31 December 191.9

in the armoury of repressive enactments, and more especially when, rightly or wrongly, the proclamation of {martial law, by means of an ordinance was fully within the limits of Government's competence. If, however, the question of prestige alone is responsible for the passage of the obnoxious legislation, then I fear the consequences of the enactment have been more deleterious to the Government's prestige than the other state of affairs might possibly have been.

Mistake in the Punjab

Passing now from this initial blunder of the Government of India, we come to the Punjab where we meet with an abundant store of mistakes. To begin with, the late Lieutenant-Governor of this Province speaking from his privileeged place in the Provincial Legislative Council said that drastic proceedings would be taken against the opponents of the Rowlatt Bill. I am not sure how far such a threat, coming as it did from the representative of a constitutional Government, could be regarded as proper : for the entire activity of the Punjab involved in the struggle against the Rowlatt Act was strictly within constitutional limits. The ex-Satrap's pronouncement of the minatory words referred to above was tantamount to declaring the mere protest against any legislation undertaken by the Government as criminal. One, however, does not know under what law such an offence would fall. A possible rejoinder may be that under the Defence of India Act, whose elasticity in obedience to the official will has become notorious, any constitutional activity of this kind may become punishable. Enthusiastic protests and demonstrations took place in other provinces as well, but the heads of those provinces did not feel the necessity of resorting to minatory declamations, nor did it become necessary for them to have recourse to shooting and killing people, and delivering their provinces over to military authorities for martial law. It was this flagrantly misguided and repressive activity which last April 3 and 5, took the form of muzzling Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew, the two popular leaders of Amritsar. Not content with this blunder, the pace of mistaken activity was accelerated, and on the 10th of the same month

these leaders were deported from Amritsar. The deportation was undertaken at a time when responsible officials fully anticipated disturbing consequence—'a fact' elicited by Sir Chimanlal Sitalvad in his cross-examination of Mr. Miles Irving, who admitted having anticipated agitation as the result of the deportation of Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal.

In view of these circumstances the responsibility for all that followed the flagrantly unwise order of deportation must necessarily be laid at the door of the authority from whom the order emanated, particularly when we know that previous to the blunder, there was no trace of any public excitement of the kind anticipated. A hartal followed as an inevitable result; but according to Mr. Jarman, then Muncipal Engineer of Amritsar, there were no signs of disorder, notwithstanding the cessation of business. In fact, Mr. Miles Irving himself admits, in his statement, that previous to the firing at the bridge, the crowd did not seem disposed to rioting, but wanted to make a representation to the head of the district for the restoration of the deported leaders. So far from there being any testimony in the official evidence to the crowd being disorderly. it shows that the crowd passed Europeans and Government buildings on its way to the Deputy Commissioner's bungalow without signifying inclination to interfere with them; their desire to petition the Deputy Commissioner for the restoration of their leaders; their not being in possession of sticks or lathis at the time, which are all evident proofs of their peaceful disposition. But the atrocity of opening fire on them was perpetrated in spite of all this, which resulted in the regrettable occurrence at the railway station, the banks and other places involving the loss of European lives (which I deplore as deeply as any other man), and once again the Deputy Commissioner had recourse to firing. All was quiet from the 10th to the 12th.

Jallianwala Bagh Firing

The next day was the well-known Baisakhi festival, and a considerable assemblage of men took place in the Jallianwala Bagh, which was gallantly and courageously attacked by General Dyer, who had, previous to reaching the spot, decided

to open fire on them. In his evidence before the Hunter Committee, he proudly boasted that he "fired and fired well", for "little firing" was, in his opinion, "bad".

He further admitted that he had made no medical arrangements for the wounded, as all the hospitals were open to them. Finally, replying to Sahibzada Sultan Ahmad Khan, he affirmed that there was no difference between mere civil disorder and rebellion. It is to be profoundly deplored that the lives of His Majesty's subjects are entrusted to the care of men who are capable of boastfully proclaiming that they "fired and fired well", who are ignorant of the difference between the menial offence of ordinarily riotous disorder and the heinous crime of rebellion; and who are incapable of realizing that the wounded cannot attend hospitals without somebody's aid. The Commander-in-Chief may profitably open some institutions for teaching such men the difference between ordinary disorders and grave rebellions, the common sense about the inability of the wounded to walk to hospitals without any help, and finally to instruct them in the elementary principles of humanity, which require that human life should be treated as valuable and should not be taken without the profoundest consideration. For a member of a fair and democratic people to have the wantonness to set his heart on firing on fellow-beings without taking adequate thought is a revoltingly execrable atrocity. It deserves to be mentioned with poignant anguish that Indian blood was recklessly made to flow in Jallianwala, with the outrageous result that so far over 500 dead have been traced. In reply to the Hon'ble Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya's interpellation in the Council, official admission went up to 290; but Amritsar's Deputy Commissioner's evidence has unmasked the reality in the amusing statement admitting the number of persons killed as three, four or five hundred—the uncertainty of hundreds deserves marked attention. This figure has been corroborated by General Dyer himself, who admitted having fired 1,650 rounds, which according to him may have killed 400 to 500 men. This firing becomes all the more indefensible and deplorable when we are told that it was quite possible to disperse the crowd in Jallianwala without recourse to firing, as

admitted by General Dyer in the course of his cross-examination.

Another matter which deserves to be specially mentioned is the operation of martial law before it had been actually proclaimed on the night between the 15th and the 16th of April. On April 11, the adminstrative control of the District was delivered up to General Dyer, and punishments and orders began to emanate from him. One is, however, left wondering what legal sanction these proceedings had behind them. Do these evidently unconstitutional proceedings, resulting as they did in the loss of more than 500 lives of His Majesty's subjects, not entitle one to expect that at least the persons who are directly liable for these deeds of violence will receive the punishment which they richly deserve ?

Who can forget the outrageous crawling order of General Dyer, by which human beings were compelled, under pain of punishment, to degrade themselves to the level of animals ? And who can ever forget the infamous floggings ? Did not this very General, in the course of his examination by the Hunter Committee, assert that India was the "land of salaams", where Indians "understood and ought to understand salaaming". Indians owe it to the honour of their country now to fully grasp the lesson of this assertion and to demonstrate, by their behavior, in future what they have learnt by it.

Other Incidents in the Punjab

Amritsar's occurrences reacted on Lahore and elsewhere in the Punjab; and a wave of indignation, caused by these wrongs, swept over the Province. The hartal of the April 6, passed off peacefully at Lahore; but the news of Mahatma Gandhi's arrest, effected under orders of the ex-Satrap of the Punjab, soon had its effects on the people of Lahore, who assembled in a large crowd to go to the Government House with the object of appealing to the Lieutenant-Governor for the cancellation of his order. The crowd was stopped on the Mall and turned back; and it is stated that the crowd was first fired on while returning, and again while it was nearing Lahori Gate.

On the 11th people were busy with the obsequies of the dead, and on the 13th they held a meeting in the Badshahi Mosque to express their sorrow. Some people, however, stripped and burnt the clothes of a C.I.D. officer, which at all events, was a regrettable act. As the people came out of the mosque on the termination of the meeting, they were fired on by the military at some neighbouring place. Then came the arrests of some of the well-known and able leaders of the people such as Lala Harikishan Lal, Pundit Ram Bhuj Dutt, Mr. Duni Chand, Bar-at-Law, and others who could under no circumstances be suspected of countenancing any kind of disorder, and who had made every possible effort to maintain peace and order in the town. But we are all painfully familiar with the treatment they reeeived in return for their civic labours, and I advisedly refrain from dilating on this painful topic.

It seems that the late Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, desired to benefit not only his own Province by his 'Nadirshahi' reign but wanted to extend its blessing to other parts of India as well. He had proposed to penalize *The Independent* newspaper from his seat in Lahore, but the Government of the United Provinces did not prove amenable to the wisdom of undertaking the duty of carrying out each and every whim of His late Honour. It is, however, regrettable that this newspaper's office could not escape the distinction of a police search. It is understood that he was also instigating the Delhi authorities to proclaim material law and desired to have other provinces in the same boat with his satrapy, so that it might evade being marked out as a solitary example; but he failed to achieve his end. He had Mr. Goverdhan Das arrested in the Madras Presidency solely on the ground that the latter had dared to furnish a correct account of all the events of theP unjab and its ruler to the press, and that the wires which Pundit Rambhuj Dutt could not, on account of his arrest, send to the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, were despatched by him. He was ultimately prosecuted, and has not yet been restored to us.

All the occurrences of the Punjab were almost wholly due to reactionary methods. Had wiser counsels prevailed, there is

ample reason to believe that not a single life would have been lost. If fire had not been opened on the unarmed crowd in Amritsar, if Mr. Gandhi had not been arrested, and if the advice of the leaders had been listened to, it can be stated without fear of contradiction that, so far as the Punjab was concerned, no untoward incident would have taken place.

The late Lieutenant-Governor did not content himself with proclaiming martial law in some cities, but gave a *carte blanche* to men of such pronounced 'competence' as General Dyer, in Amritsar, and Col. Frank Johnson, in Lahore. The latter, in his evidence before the Hunter Committee, has said that 277 persons were tried by the summary courts, out of whom 20 were convicted and 66 were whipped, the total number of stripes ammounting to 800. The latter figure included men who were publicly flogged. The Colonel has also opined, if not in so many words, that this method of punishment was full of the milk of human kindness. Further, he is responsible for the statement that the people liked the martial law and were grateful to him for maintaining peace order. It seems that people who manifested such remarkable admiration for martial law were not lucky enough to have a taste of the punishment which was brimful of kindness, otherwise they would have been less eager to express their partiality for such a regime. He has further stated that on the 10th, when fire was opened on a crowd of about 8,000 men on the Mall, it resulted in the loss of one human life and five or six wounded, which was due to the fact that the firing of the police force was very much below third class. It is a pity that none of the members of the Hunter Committee appears to have asked the gallant Colonel what in his opinion would have been the result of firing by one who had hardly ever shouldered a gun on a crowd of 8,000. The only answer according to Frank Johnsonian logic could be that none would have been injured at all. It is noteworthy that Col. Frank Johnson likes the jails immensely, and seems to regard them as unusually comfortable. If jail is really the place of such comforts, it would have been the most proper thing for the Colonel to send there those of

his admirers who expressed their deep appreciation of the martial law.

Lieutenant Col. Frank Johnson, who holds a high rank in the army, and who can unmistakably be considered an expert in military matters, has further observed that "whipping is equal to a thousand soldiers" in military equation, of course. Col. Johnson should certainly be sent to the front on some future occasion, so that in an actual engagement he may, by dispensing with soldiers, prove the striking effectiveness of the weapon he has discovered—alas, at the conclusion of the late war—and vanquish the enemy with its aid. The credit of the discovery must ever belong to this renowned and gallant soldier. Later on, he has also deposed that the order to shoot any person who stood in the way of opening shops emanated from him; and again he has affirmed that as peace in the city depended upon the cessation of the hartal, no punishment could be too severe. It is alleged that the martial law notice which was posted on the Sanatan Dharm College building was torn down by some unknown person and led the Colonel to detain the 500 men belonging to the College, who were made to march long distances in the heat of summer. They were let go after two days' detention. On this point, Sir C. Sitalvad asked him if he considered it the proper discharge of his duty to march five hundred students to the fort under the burning sun of Lahore; and the reply of the merciful and justice-loving Colonel was that he was prepared to do it again, if necessary. We learn from this gallant officer that he was responsible for punishing one thousand and eleven students. These punishments are in addition to those inflicted by the police. In answer to a question on this point, the chivalrous Colonel is reported to have stated that information was received that many students were insulting English women, and that was why he looked upon his orders, which were undoubtedly severe, as right and just, and he would continue to hold that opinion. It is a pity no one asked him on which dates after the 10th European women were seen out, and who were the boys complained against. Is it not deeply ragrettable that on the strength of baseless and absurd rumours or predilections, poor students were

subjected to subtle tortures which are truly barbarous, and shall ever continue to be regarded so.

He admitted his responsibility for a ridiculous order before the Hunter Committee, according to which no two 'natives' could walk abreast in front of a European, lest the latter should be provoked to commit a breach of the King's peace.

And again, I feel a certain commiseration for this Colonel, within whom burnt the fire of conscience with a steady flame, when he confesses his weakness in having punished a magistrate for interfering with a marriage procession and for having the offenders, including a priest, flogged. The reason why I feel compassion for the Colonel is that in my opinion this order of the magistrate did nothing to offend against justice, but perhaps necessity and expediency required it, for it brought out the real character of the likely ends which came within the operation of martial law. If two 'natives' could not walk together in front of a European lest the latter should be provoked to commit a breach of the peace, in the case of a marriage procession, the fear of a graver disturbance would be thoroughly justified.

In this instance, by arresting a marriage party which was supposed to be defying the martial law, in so far as it carried with it the potentialities of a breach of the peace, and flogging it, the one beneficial result which followed was that the whole city came to know of the incident, and the Colonel was saved the inconvenience of administering this punishment to others, as the example must have terrorized the whole city. I am, therefore, truly grieved that Col. Johnson during his 'strong administration', betrayed the weakness, induced by qualms of conscience, of dismissing a magistrate who, keeping the maintenance of peace and order in view, had, all in a *bona fide* way, ordered this supremely merciful and sublimely kind mode of chastisement. I wonder if this megistrate would care to bring the matter to the notice of Sir Michael O'Dwyer (for it was during His ex-Honour's term of office that an honest maintainer of peace was so unjustly treated), and prefer charges for the Colonel's dismissal! It would be unjust to overlook

the incident of the Badan appeal against the noble and gallant Shahi Mosque (*sic*) and the closing of its door upon Mohammedan mosque-goers. for it constitutes the most illustrious episode of the O'Dwyerian rule, never likely to be effaced from our memories. It would be an act of folly for the Musalmans to complain against this outrage. They should see for themselves that it was here that a C.I.D. officer was stripped of his clothes, and the only merciful punishment for so wanton a disregard of the all too fine susceptibilities of the Department could be closing the Mosque altogether for the time being. If it had remained open, and the same incident had been repeated, the consequences for the Musalmans would have been very grave indeed. It was also possible that the people might congregate there on the pretext of saying prayers, but really conspire against the Government, and then, Col. Johnson or the civil authorities would have been obliged to adopt severe measures. Moreover, the Musalmans should remember that if the Colonel closed the *Langar Khanas*, meant for distributing food among the poor and the hungry, because "rebellion also could be promoted there" (against which grave contingency the city had to be guarded), the closing of the Mosque must have been dictated by tender regard for the benefit of the Mohammedans themselves. It was apparent that their not congregating there for prayers would insure them against the castastrophe resulting from fanning the flame of rebellion. This Mosque may have been closed on another possible ground. On the 12th, when a number of Musalmans were returning from it, the Colonel's guard was attacked in the rear (the Colonel is silent as to how and with what weapon) and perhaps an accidental but vigorous dead set was made at the Colonel himself, with the help of a big or trifling brickbat.

Placed in such a helpless situation, if the Colonel ordered firing and some lives were lost, the matter should not assume the magnitude of a complaint; for according to the recently propounded principle already referred to while dealing with the evidence produced before the Hunter Committee in Delhi only "a trifling number of men were killed to save a large number from decimation." If the Colonel had refrained from

firing it was quite within the pale of possibility that the centre of the army would have been rushed, which would have led to more deaths among the crowd than actually took place on the 12th.

Endowed with a rare genius, this war-lord anticipated that if the citizens threw any bombs, the lives of his soldiers would be lost in vain; and to provide against such a contingency, he had kept two aeroplanes in readiness to go up at a given signal and drop bombs on the city. This wisdom-propelled precaution achieved a remarkable end, namely that the citizens were (according to the perverse imagination of the gallant Colonel) prevented from using their hand grenades, and the Colonel's army, through his foresight and God's grace, remained intact and quite safe.

After describing the incidents at Lahore, we come to Kasur. The following is a bare statement of facts gathered from the evidence of official witnesses who appeared before the Hunter Committee :

On Appril 11, a public meeting was held at Kasur, at which speeches were delivered about the Rowlatt Act.

A hartal followed the news of Mahatma Gandhi's arrest and continued till the 12th.

On the 12th, a procession of people carrying black flags proceeded towards the station, when, according to the evidence of Mr. P. Marsden, the Sub-divisional Officer, the leaders declared that the British Raj had come to an end. The people attacked the railway station, godown, goods, waggons, and passenger trains, and looted all the cash which they found there. Similar incidents took place at Khem Karan and the station was damaged at Patti.

At the Kasur Railway Station, a train was stopped. Two soldiers who were travelling on this train fired one or two shots on the crowd, after which they were attacked and killed. The crowd was shouting that two of their men had been killed (which meant that they meant to avenge their death).

On the same day, 300 Indian and 50 British soldiers reached Kasur, under the command of Captain Macray, and on April 16 he declared martial law before a public meeting held at the Town Hall. The total number of arrests made was 172, out of which 51 persons were convicted, and the rest were discharged or acquitted. In addition to these, two persons were shot by the sentry, because they failed to reply when challenged—one of them was a deaf mute ! During this period the people were subjected to various punishments which must be mentioned :

A case was put in which people were imprisoned, and they were obliged to answer the calls of nature where they were.

Some persons were made to draw lines on the ground with their nose, as vouched by some reliable persons. But the military officer responsible for this punishment stated that he did not make such an order; he had only ordered men to prostrate themselves on the ground, which was a form of salaaming.

The headmaster of a high school and an aged man were flogged.

On May 3, a public gallows was erected, but was subsequently removed by the order of the Punjab Government.

The Headmaster of the Municipal Board School complained that the boys disobeyed his orders. He was, therefore, asked to send any three boys for punishment. As the three boys sent by the Headmaster were physically weak, a second order was sent to him to furnish three robust boys; who were selected and sent and were punished for the misfortune of being physically strong.

The Headmaster of the Islamia School had made no complaint against his boys, but three lads from this school too were similarly punished.

The entire male population of Kasur, numbering some eight to ten thousand, were summoned for identification several times, and were ordered to bare their heads.

The police searched the houses of eight pleaders, and arrested several others, including those who had helped the Government to maintain peace and order. Mr. Dhanpat Raj, Pleader, was arrested without any evidence of any kind against him.

Persons were flogged before prostitutes, who were collected to witness the punishment.

Forty persons were flogged, each receiving 18 stripes on an average, and some students were publicly flogged.

From 20 to 25 persons were given the fancy punishment of 'skipping', which was said to be good for their health.

A poet who had been arrested was asked by Capt. Doveton, the Martial Law Administrator, to write an ode in his honour and was released in reward for it.

How can one characterize these punishments except as being a leaf out of mediaeval history ? In the present age, inflicting such punishments, and proudly boasting about them, can only come from individuals wholly devoid of human attributes.

The occurences of Gujranwala were still worse. Here the unarmed civil populace was bombed from aeroplanes for the first, and let us hope, for last time in India.

On April 6, hartal was observed. But previous to this, on April 5, a public meeting was convened at which people were enjoined to observe hartal—in speeches, which according to Colonel O'Brien, incited the people to acts of lawlessness. On April 14, a disturbance took place as described in official evidence, which led to the burning of the station, the cutting of telegraph wires, and damage to the court buildings. Government property and railway stations were partially damaged in 14 places other than Gujranwala. Some Europeans were also assaulted at some of these places. But the most heinous crime alleged to have been committed at Ramnagar was the burning of the King's effigy, after which some people went to the bathe in the river.

On the 14th, aeroplanes were sent to Gujranwala where six

bombs were dropped. The damage done by two of these bombs is stated to be six killed and six injured. Colonel O'Brien's evidence is silent about the damage done by the four remaining bombs. As has given the total number of casualties as 27, including 11 killed, which figure appears astonishingly small, in view of the frequent bombing and machine-gunning from the aeroplanes.

Colonel O'Brien then goes on to say that at 11 the same morning, the police fired on the people for the first time when Mr. Heron was assaulted. On the second occasion, a crowd crossing the railway line was fired on without any reason; after which wherever people collected, they were fired on. It does not require very hard thinking to come to the conclusion that the gallant Colonel's memory has played him false in regard to the number of casualities. It is, one might observe with regret, the inferior shooting by the police which deprived certain persons of the satisfaction of doing justice to Gujranwala.

Colonel O'Brien asserted that the order could be restored only with the help of the army, and martial law would not have been necessary if summary courts had been established. However, according to Col. Macray everything emanated from the Punjab Government, of whose will the district authorities were mere instruments.

A catalogue of all the wrongs committed before or after the announcement of martial law would be rather prolix, but a few concrete illustrations would not be out of place. Enumerated thus are :

1. Flogging publicly.

2. Refusal to admit people to bail.

3. The arrest of persons, on information supplied by the police, without due inquiry.

4. Handcuffing and marching those under arrest a distance of two miles through the bazar, preceded by two municipal commissioners, one Hindu and one Musalman. (Most probably to ridicule Hindu-Muslim unity.)

5. Sending 23 arrested persons of Lahore by cattle trucks, and marching them through the bazars of Lahore.

6. Punishing a police sergeant for failing to give evidence as directed.

Gentlemen, this is a brief but deeply sad tale of the inhuman reaction of which the fair Province of Punjab has been the victim. I have refrained from dwelling on all the atrocities in detail for the obvious reason that you yourselves are fully familiar with them.

Conclusions Regarding Delhi and the Punjab

I have, after carefully weighing all the circumstances, arrived at the conclusion that the Delhi and Punjab occurrences were due to a series of blunders. I see behind all these happenings one mistake after another, like those committed by a physician, who causes endless harm to the patient, by failing to diagnose the disease. Had not the Rowlatt Act been passed in the teeth of the opposition referred to, not the smallest event of an untoward nature would have taken place in Delhi or the Punjab! The enactment of this legislation brought the Satyagraha movement into existence, which was considered the last remedy. It was not translated into practice in Delhi, but the better part of the country regarded it as an acceptable idea. As I have already said, not a drop of blood would have been shed in Delhi, if better counsels had prevailed. The Chief Commissioner certainly acted with patience, and largely helped to save the situation; but all that occurred in Delhi is traceable to the mistakes of other officials. Had no firing taken place at Railway Station, as none took place in the King Edward Park, the situation would have been peacefully overcome.

Coming to the Punjab, the Amritsar happenings clearly show that the initial blunder consisted in the muzzling and deportation orders served on Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew, which emanated direct from Lahore, without previous consultation with the man on the spot, who had every right—being entrusted with the sole responsibility of keeping order in this District—to be consulted in respect to so delicate a matter.

This led to all the sad occurrences which followed. I have a right to ask any right-minded persons whether, in his opinion, any of the gruesome events we all know, and which have been referred to above, would have come to pass, if the initial blunder had not been perpetrated ? Similarly, but for Mr. Gandhi's arrest at Palwal and the firing on the crowd at Lahore, there was no fear of any untoward event at Lahore. The crowd could easily have been dispersed by other means, as represented by the leaders to the authorities at the time. The occurrences of Kasur and Gujranwala, too, arose out of like blunders, otherwise the demonstrations would have ceased in a short time, as generally happened everywhere.

Lord Hunter's Committee

The Disorders Inquiry Committee was appointed in response to India's constant demand for a searching inquiry into these occurrences. It commenced its work in November, at Delhi, regarding the Delhi and the Punjab occurrences. We have no right to pronounce any premature judgment and must patiently await its report. Although our bitter experience of such committees in the past has been abundantly depressing, we must wait and see, and refrain from expressing any opinion. Considering the fact that the findings of the Hunter Committee will, at most, have a moral effect, we cannot have any very high expectation of it, nor can we fail to observe the more or less inconsequential nature of its labours; for has not the Indemnity Act taken the wind out of its sails, by guaranteeing impunity to official whose appalling infractions would, in a court of law, have assumed the magnitude of grave crimes ? This Act also covers the mistakes committed previous to the operation of martial law, and goes as far back as last March 30. It is therefore not a matter for wonder that delinquent officials are encouraged to confess their crimes with unseemly audacity, for they feel that they have a right to say and to do worse things.

As borne out by the procedure adopted at Delhi, it was not originally intended by the Congress Committee to boycott the Hunter Committee. But their modest request for the enlarge-

ment of certain Punjab leaders (who are suffering incarceration for no crime other than that of being leaders), with a view to securing the best non-official evidence, was rejected; and they were constrained in the last resort, regretfully, to decide that they should refrain from leading any evidence before the Hunter Committee, but produce the same before the Non-Official Committee, which is also doing its work. The non-official report will, no doubt, present the other side of the picture in bright colour. I am of opinion that General Dyer, Colonel Frank Johnson and some others have greatly lightened the task of the Non-Official Committee. In fact, India may be fully content with reprinting the statements of those witnesses and circulating them widely in England to bring home to the British the real nature of the share of some of their able representatives in ruling India, and also to let them have an idea of the value and worth these men attach to Indian lives. There is, however, a good deal of work before this Committee, and we hope it will take early steps to publish, both in India and in England, the evidence it has collected.

It is India's misfortune that the men at the helm of her affairs seem to be actuated with the belief that the central principle of government must ever be repression.

Although the evidence daily accumulating drives one to the conclusion that repression always leaves a vigorous dynamic force in its wake, yet our Government prefers to adhere to its antiquated political creed, its daily increasing deleterious results notwithstanding.

If Lord Curzon laid India under a debt of gratitude by the partition of Bengal, Sir Michael O'Dower has done nothing less, by his *Nadirshahi* rule in the Punjab, and of which we shall soon begin to be conscious. Sir Michael will have occasion to be proud of his achievement, if political activity is snuffed out in the Punjab. But, if the real political life of the Province begins after his strenuous efforts to stamp it out, the ex-Satrap will have occasion to realize the magnitude of his blunder. He will then realize that the bitter poison he minis-

tered to the Punjab, actually proved the elixir of life to her.

The New Reforms

The forthcoming reforms will, no doubt, go a certain length to affect the antediluvian nature of the existing constitution. But, so long as India's share in the Central Government is not of a really satisfactory nature, we cannot hope to have seen the last of the massacre of Jallianwala and the bombing of Gujranwala. We have not the least doubt about the good intentions of the Rt. Hon. Edwin Samuel Montagu, who, we fully realize, has not merely taken endless pains to achieve the successful conclusion of his efforts in regard to the Reform Scheme, but has evinced great perseverence and statesmanship. in winning the goal, in spite of the reactionary efforts of certain parties. He has established his claim to be regarded a true well-wisher and benefactor of India. But we cannot help observing that these reforms fall short even of the minimum demand of India.

Judging the recommendations of the Joint Committee of the Lords and Commons relating to the Central Government in the light of the announcement of August 20, 1917, we are constrained to say that they do not fulfil the promise vouchsafed to us. Nor can it be said that increasing the number of Indian members of the Central Executive Council means the devolution of responsibility in the real sense. Such effect as it may possibly have must needs be confined to the moral sphere. It is, however, satisfactory to note that the Joint Committee has rejected the Guard Committee, and recommended the constitution of the Council of State as a true revising chamber, which seems to be free from the defects of the former and curtails our apprehensions. The Joint Committee has offered useful counsel with regard to the selection of the President of the Indian Legislature. It is rightly advised that great deliberation should be exercised in selecting for this office one who, apart from being a man of acknowledged ability, should also possess experience of parliamentary principles and procedure. Provincial Governors are invested with the power to dismiss ministers, which, in other words, means that the

ministers will be subject to executive pressure, which may prove an impediment in the way of the realization of the legitimate and beneficial aims which they may have in view. It will also give rise to a belief in the country that the possibility of the Indians availing themselves of the modest share allowed to them in the Provincial Councils has been curtailed to a certain extent in this way. Then, who does not know that Bombay, Bengal and Madras are the advanced provinces of India, and that they are certainly ahead of certain other province in the fields of education, commerce and political activity ? Would it not evoke their resentment when they find that they get nothing more than commerce, industry and education in 'transferred subjects', although they are, without the least doubt, entitled to much more. To allow provincial legislatures responsible control only over commerce, industry and less important subjects is decidedly a disappointment for India. When we realize that we have no 'fiscal autonomy', which is the essence of our demands regarding economic control, without which commerce and industry must needs remain in a static and lifeless condition, we can hardly entertain any hope of developing our commerce and industry. With reference to the subject of education, no opinion can be formed regarding some of the reservations hinted at in the Joint Committee's Report until they are before us in a definite form. But I hope, as authoritatively stated in reliable circles, education will be a completely 'transferred subject'. A good step seems to have been taken in respect to the question of franchise. The Joint Committee has liberalized the principle of franchise by recognizing the demands of the depressed classes. But Indian leaders are unable to understand why the rulers and subjects of Native States are put on the same footing as British Indian subjects in regard to the right of vote and election, and it is difficult for them to extend a warm welcome to this innovation. The Joint Committee does not appear generous in not applying the principle of enfranchisement of women as a whole, although its adoption is left to the choice of different provinces. It can, however, be safely asserted that the right has not been altogether overlooked. It would have been advisable to select some

provinces for the operation of the right, after it had been even partially recognized by the Joint Committee.

It would be a great injustice to declare those convicted for more than six months ineligible for election for five years. Unless a reservation is made in favour of those who are convicted of offences relating to the State, such as S. 124 A, we will be deprived of some of the best men of our country, who have been the victims (from time to time) of executive blunders.

I regret to say that the Bill fixes the period of our political schooling at 10 years, which compared with other courses of instruction, appears to be long and tedious, especially because we are left in a state of uncertainty. At the conclusion of this period, supposing the Parliamentary Committee does no more than make immaterial recommendations, at the end of 10 years, it would not be possible to predict the number of decades for which India may have to wait for the attainment of complete self-government. This uncertainly could be disposed of by adhering to the Congress-League Scheme. Unless there is a definite promise that India will get self-government within 15 or 20 years, it is futile to expect India for ever to continue to value the modest gift of the Reform Scheme. The appointment of a Parliamentary Standing Committee for advising the Government on important Indian matters is satisfactory inasmuch as it promises to rescue India from the cold indifference which has been her lot so far. It signifies that a welcome beginning of the process of realizing India's importance is being made. It is now essential for India to have a permanent organization in London to co-operate with the Parliamentary Committee when necessary, and to place Indian aspirations before Britain more prominently. It would be quite appropriate to entrust this task to the British Committee of the Indian National Congress and the London Branch of the Muslim League, but it is necessary to consider the ways of making them more useful. At present it will be our duty to devote special attention to the rules which are going to be appended to the Reform Act. If we fail to devote to this task the time which it deserves, the few benefits now accuring to us may also dwindle. However, looking at the Reforms as a whole, we should welcome them

as the first stone of the foundation of self-government. We must not allow the occurrences of the Punjab, and the question of Turkey, to prevent us from taking that interest in them which as Indians it is our duty to do. Although we are not likely to forget the deep agony caused by the occurrences of the Punjab and the events relating to the holy places, the Khilafat and Turkey, we should, while continuing our constitutional struggle, make a united effort to make the Reforms successful, as on that will depend our future development.

Hindu-Muslim Unity

The secret of the success, not merely of the Reform Scheme, but of all the work which is being done by Indians in India and abroad, lies in Hindu-Muslim unity. There is no need to look back, as both these communities have now fully realized that unity alone can be the firm foundation of India's real improvement and future progress. Although war is rightly regarded as a calamity, the share the World War (now happily ended) has had in forging the links of unity between these two great communities, entitles us to say that the War has bequeathed India a legacy which is likely to prove the key to the success of the national self-realization of India. I must, however, confess that there are certain matters which at times come in the way of the full realization of this blessing. Those who are inspired by a genuine desire to serve their country cannot be affected by any differences of race or creed, which are the same to-day as they were before. Hindu-Muslim relations, however, appear to be infinitely more satisfactory than they have been in past years. The question of Government appointments is no longer capable of engaging our attention to any appreciable degree, and although political rights were the subject of much controversy between them before, the Congress-League Compact of 1916 went a very long way to settle that matter. Such other matters as the League and the Congress may still require to have an understanding about will, I am sure, be easily settled between them on some appropriate occasion.

I shall, therefore, address myself to the one question which has an importance quite its own, and which is none other than

the preservation of cows. We have, for some time past, been indulging in indirect allusions and vague hints, and to my mind it is high time that this question was dealt with in clear and specific terms with a view to reaching a satisfactory conclusion. Some of the methods which some of our Hindu brethren have at times permitted themselves to adopt for the attainment of their object have, in certain instances, undoubtedly proved highly objectionable, and naturally tending to defeat the very purpose aimed at. But to-day, when both Hindus and Muslims are marching together through a new era, when various differences are gradually, but surely, being transformed into varied phases of unity, the possibility of the resumption of such fruitless efforts is becoming remote. In fact, we are now inspired by that spirit of patriotism which is sure to prove the key to the solution, not merely of the question of the preservation of cows, but also to the final settlement of all other differences. When two sections begin to co-operate in a spirit of loving comradeship, sharing one another's burdens, the inevitable result follows and their differences, passing through various phases of mutual toleration, finally merge in a community of interest..., and the very differences are transformed into the surest basis of united endeavours.

Our Hindu compatriots have, for some time past, been making genuine efforts to meet us more than half-way, and deserve our sincerest gratitude for their goodwill. It is, indeed, a testimony to their keen realization of the needs of nation-building. It therefore behoves us, as inheritors of a noble creed, to reciprocate their amiable regard with greater warmth and goodwill to demonstrate that our faith teaches us that every good act deserves a better return. Our Hindu brethren enthusiastically and spontaneously observed the Khilafat Day with us, and in closing their business to share our sorrow, they evinced remarkably large sympathies. They cheerfully bore great commercial loss only to prove their sincere regard for our sentiments in regard to a matter which was exclusively religious, and could claim their interest in no other way. Can these sincere demonstrations of friendly regard and goodwill go for nothing? Most certainly not; nor can they possibly fail to evoke deserving responses from a people not dead to all noble feeling.